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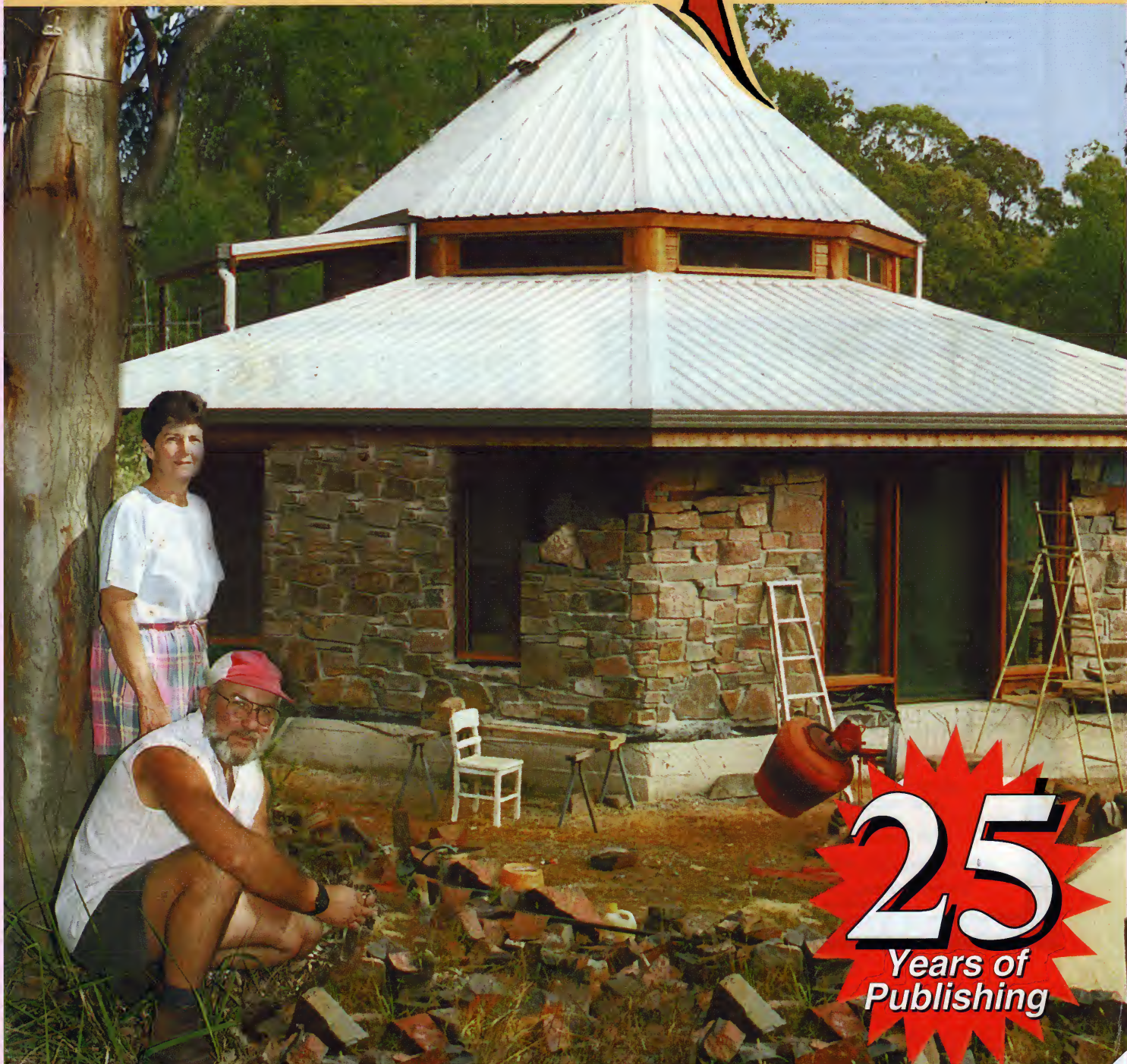
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# Grass Roots

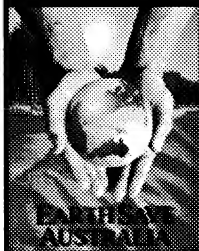
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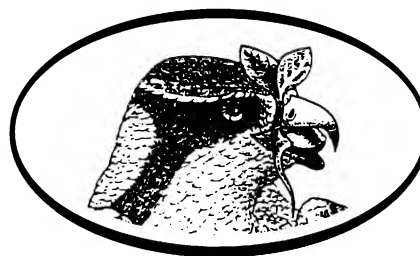
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# Welcome to Grass Roots magazine



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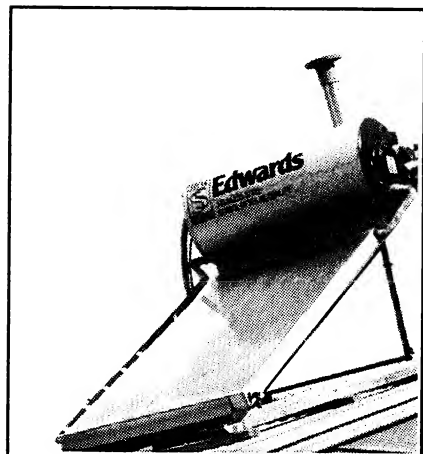
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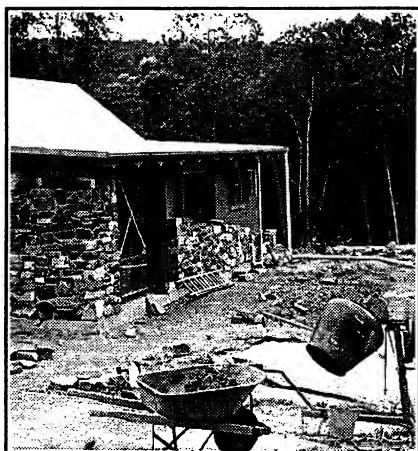
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## COVER PHOTOS

**Front Cover:** Ros and Kevin Runciman have built their home and two cottages on their 140 ac bush property at Dungog, NSW. Ros decided to tackle the stonework as part of the project. Read her story on page 29. Photo Sandra Turnbull.

**Back Cover:** The beautiful view of the Pinnacle Mountain behind 'Shalimar' lake at the Permaculture Institute at Tyalgum. See *The Changing Face of Permaculture* page 63. Photo Mic Clarke, mohan@om.com.au

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

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It's taken a while, but we are starting to settle into our new office. It seems very large and clean compared to our former overcrowded messy place, but, as we're still awaiting book shelves and the arrival of all the reference books, only time will tell as to its spaciousness. We should have been fully settled in, but it is difficult juggling time for packing along with getting a magazine off to the printers.

Priorities first has been the focus, with everything playing second fiddle as we've rushed around to meet the deadline. To say it's been a mite trying is an understatement. I'm still awaiting a design-cum-paste-up bench and have had to make do with the desk. Often the material the team has needed for a column or filler has been back in the old office, so my evenings have been spent finding all the required bits and pieces. We're getting organised and should have the time to set everything up in the lull while the magazine is being printed.

The move has not gone unnoticed by the possums, who lodged a protest in the form of a vicious attack on one of the pot plants the week we shifted. Little do they realise all the boxes and books that hide their entry holes into the office will soon be relocated, leaving walls totally exposed. I've mentioned before that the occasional creature has taken advantage of the space behind boxes and made itself a comfy sleeping spot. There should be no opportunity for this in the future and hopefully they can be kept out. I don't want them leaving calling cards on my precious old livestock books.

We won't be able to forget these pests in a hurry, unfortunately, as some of the books carry the undeniable odour of possum pee. We would prefer our memories to be a trifle more pleasant! A gift that arrived just days ago will do much to restore the romantic view of 'possum magic'. Judy Clark, whose article on working heavy horses was in the last issue, sent us a delightful piece for the wall featuring a wide-eyed possum – a friendly reminder of this species. Judy has been a reader for many years and is like an old family friend, so we really appreciated her thoughtfulness. We have decided too we much prefer possums in pictures than in the fur.

The Contact section in the Grassifieds has been a talking point since its inception, occasional readers complaining that such a column was unnecessary and an unrealistic way of meeting people. Despite a few bad eggs exploiting people, the column has been a resounding success, matching up many couples who thought they would be single forever. We have the lovely story of some mature-aged folk who met and married as a result of GR earmarked for next issue, but a letter received recently on this subject begs to be shared, and highlights the happiness the Contacts can bring. It was sent from a 'satisfied reader', to quote his own words, and we will keep it anonymous because of its personal nature. 'Being a confirmed bachelor for a number of years and set in my ways, I was just browsing through a GR mag early in May when I noticed an ad from a lovely lady from the Taree area. I answered the ad and was disappointed after three weeks of not getting an answer, but later on that fourth week a reply. No phone number though, but I persevered and now we are planning to live together. I have met my soul mate and a wonderful partner as well. So fella's take heart, there is always someone out there and we seem to share nearly all the same things together.' Satisfied Reader.

There is a lot more to life than just the practical subjects so frequently covered in GR, and it brings much satisfaction to know the magazine looks at the whole person as well as how they do things.

We were thrilled too that Arthur Petitioner's article in No 128 elicited much positive feedback, as has Helen Garity's piece on 'The Jewel of Self-Sufficiency.' One response to this latter article too good to end up in the bin was representative of numerous readers' thoughts. 'I've just finished Helen's article and would like to thank her for a timely and much needed article. I'm coming to grips with a single life myself . . . after 20 years of marriage. What she wrote and the way it was written has given me optimism, encouragement and a new way of looking at my situation. I would have liked to have written and thanked her personally . . .' (A GR Bloke)



It's possible the issues involved in starting again, or reinventing oneself, are irrelevant to many who enjoy the magazine. Rest assured, we're not planning to turn GR into a lonely hearts forum. A second pair of hands on the farm is a tremendous asset, and if they've come about as a result of GR we're pleased and proud and want to share it with everyone.

In today's society people are quick to complain if service or a product is poor or they don't like something, but they are not always as prompt in offering thanks. We advise, assist and send out heaps of info, in the main without acknowledgement. We don't do it to receive a pat on the back but have a genuine interest in helping. Mary, our editor, received a brief note from a reader she assisted over a year ago when they were seeking help for stopping a huge new landfill in the local catchment area. 'Good news is council is concentrating on re-use – recycle and will probably build a much smaller facility in a less risky area. We've all learned a lot and the commitment and hard work of concerned citizens including yourself is truly inspiring!' In the past we oldies used to say, 'many hands make light work', perhaps we need to paraphrase this for the late nineties, into something like 'networking brings results'. Once more it's pleasing GR could help.

With Christmas looming and the silly season in full swing, David and the hard-working team join me in wishing everyone a happy and healthy celebration. Christmas is a time for family and friends to renew links and to share love as well as gifts. May it be a rich and rewarding time for everyone.

# CITY OR THE BUSH

by Sue Nicholas, Croydon, Qld.

**I've been living in the Croydon area since 1980. When we arrived here it was really still the wild west and even now it is wonderfully isolated. I love the fact that the nearest town is 150 kilometres away, and the nearest city is 560 kilometres. We still get cut off in the wet season, and telephones and power are a bit dicey at times. We never did make a fortune gold mining, thank goodness, and now we live in town with about 90 other people, but I certainly had my apprenticeship in doing it tough. We lived in a series of rough bush camps and innovations like a wood stove, a water pump, and the first solar panels were tremendous boons. Times change and it's practically impossible to live on a small mining lease these days, but being part of a small community has its own rewards.**

I was a city girl. I had city skills. I mean I could find my car in a ten-storey carpark and drag people off at the traffic lights. I actually thought it was fun to go shopping in a department store on Christmas Eve.

Then I went bush – bush with a vengeance. My husband had had a hankering to be a gold-miner since he was knee high to a grasshopper and life is all about dreams. So we ended up together in the Gulf Country in Far North Queensland, with two young children. We sort of just strung a tarp between two trees and started digging for gold. My mother approved of the marriage – she said she'd always wanted a gold mine in the family. Then again, she hadn't actually seen the mine.

Housekeeping was a bit of a challenge for me. I had a university education, but I didn't know much that was useful. It seemed that all the local women knew how to milk a goat, make jam and find the business end of a horse! They grew a crazy big marrow that they called a bean and made apple pies out of, their yeast bottles fizzed properly and their firewood always burnt well! But I coped.

I coped when my kids ate witchetty grubs alive. 'You just bite the heads off and eat the rest, mum.' I even coped with our first (and last) butchering experience, when my husband butchered an apparently normal beast only to discover that it had three whole rumps. After all, my city sister assures me that her butcher uses the same breed of cattle in his shop! By this time we had an amazing homemade, fibreglass freezer, powered inefficiently with a petrol motor. We were given a

bullock to kill, which duly happened. The men were cutting up the beast and I was at the table carefully bagging and labelling the meat. The kids were carrying. All went well. In comes rump, steak, rump, stew, rump . . . Then it was a case of 'Dad says the rest is called bits of cow'. So I had bags labelled 'cow'. I also had less savoury looking hunks set aside for dog meat – labelled 'dog', which gave a friend a bit of a turn when she went to the freezer later: 'cow', 'duck', 'cow', 'dog'!

I even coped the night when I nervously visited the outback dunny at three in the morning, not quite sure what was lurking in the shadows and jumping at the slightest rustle. I had just got settled when all twelve bottles of ginger beer exploded together

nearby. Wow! Life in the raw!

My husband coped with my mechanical ineptitude over the years. I'm a pretty shonky trades assistant at times. I was in charge of the level when we were building a cement tank stand in the first camp. 'Lower', says I, 'lower, lower, lower'. Then he bailed up. He could see with the naked eye that it had to go up. You see, I thought that the little bubble would roll down hill.

We survived a lot, including 12 years of home education – right through to grade 12. I certainly learnt a lot. For one, I learnt to spell and I'm pretty crash hot at times tables. Apart from that there were juggling acts to learn – being Mum, teacher, gold-miner's assistant and chief cook and bottle

washer, gardener and small livestock keeper. Having two adolescent girls, close in age, but far apart in personality, at home in an isolated environment all day every day is rewarding and interesting, but a whisker difficult at times. Especially when they reached the age when they discovered that Mum doesn't know everything. If she doesn't know everything then she doesn't know anything . . . law of logic to my teenagers anyway. We all came through the experience very well in the end!

Anyway, I have now learnt to use a level, and not only a level but a crowbar and post-hole shovel and a hammer and pliers. I learnt to make damper and boil the billy and grow and cook New Guinea butter beans. Now all my friends can cook in microwaves and use electronic banking, and I suppose I could have just waited 20 years for the city to catch up with the bush. But I'm glad I didn't.



Sue and her husband Danny at their gold mine in the Gulf Country, Far North Queensland



Right: Danny supervising the first one-head stamper for crushing the ore.



Left: The dunny-with-a-view from the days of exploding ginger beer bottles.



Below: Sue honing her cooking skills at the mine site, quite a challenge for a university-educated city girl.



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# GROW YOUR OWN LICORICE

by Isabell Shipard, Nambour, Qld.

## ALL SORTS OF USES FOR THIS ANCIENT PLANT



The botanical name of licorice, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, means sweet root, and that is exactly what it is. Licorice contains an unusual substance, glycyrrhizin, which is actually 50 times sweeter than sugar. It is detectable if only one drop is added to 15,000 drops of pure water. Although so much sweeter than sugar, it has the remarkable power to quench thirst, whereas other sweeteners tend to increase thirst. Of special significance, the sweetener in licorice may safely be taken by diabetics.

Licorice root can be used to sweeten foods and drinks. It is used to flavour beer and tobacco. Try chewing a piece of licorice root when you feel like a chocolate or sweet. Chewing licorice root has helped many people to stop smoking. Licorice root also contains asparagine in a natural pain relieving form. Throughout history, licorice has been a valuable

medicinal, attributed as containing rejuvenating, healing and nutritional properties, used to aid endurance. The plant has often been called a 'cure-all'.

Licorice is a hardy leguminous bush to one metre high. The plant is deep rooting; in fact it is the root system that has the sweetening, flavouring and therapeutic benefits. Besides being the source of flavouring for the traditional licorice lollies, it is used extensively in lozenges and medicines to conceal the nauseous taste of drugs otherwise unable to be administered.

Licorice root has some remarkable medicinal properties that have long been known to herbalists, although they have only recently been confirmed by modern researchers. The root contains a number of steroid hormones, which closely resemble deoxycorticosterone in the effects they produce. Deoxycorticosterone is a

hormone produced by the adrenal cortex, an important endocrine gland responsible for controlling many vital bodily functions, including the metabolic rate at which the body burns energy. A mild deficiency of the hormones produced by the adrenal cortex can cause such symptoms as fatigue, low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), and a slow metabolic rate which may cause overweight. The hormones produced by this gland also cause the liver to release the glycogen that is stored there. When the liver releases glycogen, the body is in effect, burning stored energy. Licorice has been used in place of cortisone in the treatment of Addison's disease.

The adrenal cortical hormones are also responsible for maintaining proper blood pressure and for maintaining the proper chemistry of the gastrointestinal tract. A deficiency in these hormones can lead to

a number of gastrointestinal disturbances such as severe heartburn and stomach ulcers. Recent research by universities in Japan and Europe record complete cures from peptic, duodenal and gastric ulcers after treating patients with licorice roots for two to six weeks. Scientific research also has found that licorice contains estrogen, a natural aid in eliminating hot flushes during menopause and in post-hysterectomy care. Licorice has also been used for fertility and has an ancient reputation as an aphrodisiac.

Other medicinal uses for which licorice has been applied are as a tonic, strengthener of the respiratory system, an aid to digestion, to remove mucus from the body, for inflammation, for fluid retention, and as a mild laxative.

The aniseed flavour of licorice as lollies has been as popular as chocolates. Unfortunately, modern research is able to substitute synthetic substances, molasses and other sweeteners for pure licorice. Therefore, if wishing to use licorice for its therapeutic and medicinal benefit, make sure the sweets are pure licorice, otherwise use natural licorice root.

Licorice is one of the oldest and best known remedies for coughs and chest complaints. The earliest Mesopotamian clay tablets gave many uses of licorice as a medicine and as the elixir of life. The Hindus, Greeks, Romans, Babylonians and Chinese all knew about the value of licorice. Today, licorice is being researched for AIDS as it has been found to be beneficial in boosting the immune system.



Above: The licorice patch where plants grow up to a metre high and sucker vigorously. The plant can adapt to any climate.

Below: Close up view of licorice leaves.



Recent research information, given by Dr Herbert Pierson, speaking at the World Congress on Cancer, Sydney, 1994, shows that licorice kills bacteria in the mouth that cause tooth decay. This information should be made available to every Australian family. Growing licorice and chewing the natural root could be a very practical way of cutting dentists'

bills, and the trauma of dentist visits. Many people who grew up in England or Europe remember with nostalgia being able to buy a stick of natural licorice that would last all week and was far better than chewing gum.

Hundreds of tonnes of licorice are used by all countries today for food, medicine, beverages, pills, confections,

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in tobacco, for conditioning and flavouring.

## GROWING NOTES

Licorice is indigenous to south-east Europe, preferring moist sandy soil and an open sunny position. It can be grown in any climate in Australia, but is frost and drought tender so needs to be kept moist and protected from frosts.

Seeds or root divisions are best planted in spring, summer or early autumn. A bed of at least a metre or two square is needed per plant, as it will sucker vigorously. The more the plant suckers, the more root there is to use. Annual vegetables could be grown in the bed while the licorice plant, a perennial, is becoming established, thus making efficient use of the space. The plant should be cut down each year after flowering.

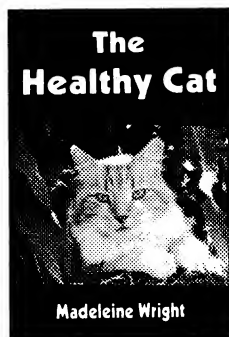
Interested readers can obtain a copy of Isabell Shipard's book *Absolutely Delicious Licorice – A Complete Guide To Growing and Using Licorice*, by sending \$7 to: Isabell Shipard, Box 66, Nambour 4560.

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# POWERFULLY SIMPLE STRATEGIES

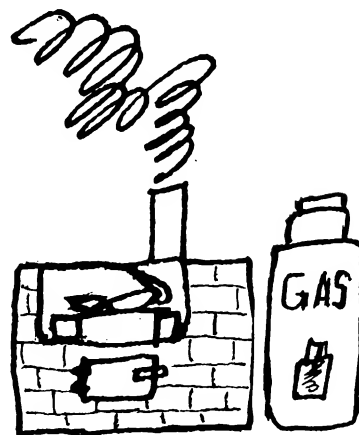
by Mary Horsfall, Longwood East, Vic.

Most Victorians coped on a personal level with the recent gas crisis, when homes were without gas for up to two weeks, with good humour and resourcefulness. The effects on industry, however, are a different matter, with estimates of the final cost still escalating.

While being on a much smaller scale, interruptions to power supplies, whether from storm damage or accidents, are not infrequent and can be lengthy. Householders can develop strategies to minimise their personal inconvenience when such interruptions occur. In the long term, some might consider converting some, or all, of their household energy consumption to renewable energies, as discussed elsewhere in this issue. Those who are unable, or unwilling, to go down the route of energy self-sufficiency can, even so, take some simple steps to insulate themselves from major inconvenience.

Years ago, we lived in an all-electric house in an area subject to frequent blackouts. It seemed only logical then, to opt for a variety of energy sources next time around. While the main power source is still electricity, we have bottled gas for cooking and wood for heating – the wood fire can also double as a cooker, albeit quite slow. During a power blackout we are still able to cook and keep warm, and have candles and kerosene lamps for lighting. We could even, at a pinch, heat water to have a bath. We did, for a number of years, also have a solar-booster hot water system, but that is another story involving a solar panel smashed by hail and a transfer pump that cost more to run than the electric hot water system did.

Most Australian homes have a barbecue in the backyard, so lack of a cooking facility need not be a problem – just make sure its fuel source is regularly replenished. Those without the



ubiquitous 'barbie' might consider purchasing a small camping fuel stove, a second-hand one is suitable for emergency use. Do make sure it is kept in working order; you don't want the added hassle, in an emergency situation, of having to scurry around making repairs or finding parts.

Keep a small torch in each bedroom in case of nighttime power failures, and a stock of spare batteries put away safely – they're no use to you if they've all been used in electronic toys and are flat.

Store a stock of candles and matches (out of reach of small hands and inquisitive minds) and make sure all responsible adults know where they are. Please take all safety precautions when naked flames are being used. We, and our children, are less familiar with their use than were previous generations and need to be ultra-cautious.

These basic measures can make the difference between a power outage being a real pain in the neck and it being a time of family adventure and bonding. An evening spent cooking a meal on the barbecue or camp stove, eating it by candlelight, and then sitting in the semidark telling stories and sharing memories till bedtime, by torchlight of course, doesn't sound so hard to bear, does it?

# SELF-EMPOWERMENT

by Colin & Felicia Rose, Hampton, QLD.

'Well mate, there she is, here's the keys, we'll be back in a couple of days and put the front steps on.'

We'd just taken delivery of our new lock-up stage factory-built home minus wiring, plumbing and many other such 'luxury' items. It was 'planted' among a forest of lantana and privet, facing north with reserves on three sides. The privacy alone was worth the lack of services.

We had been quoted mega bucks for power to be connected, but the real killer was the minimum charge guarantee required over a 10 year period which two people could not possibly hope to consume even if full air-conditioning were to be used 24 hours per day.

Prior to commissioning the house to be built we undertook extensive research into the most efficient forms of power provision. Although we have a creek, it's somewhat seasonal (even more so with the recent drought), so hydro power was rejected as a reliable source. Wind power was considered, but rejected on the grounds of the swirling nature of prevailing winds due to our location on the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range.

The only viable option was solar power - Queensland after all is supposed to be full of it. Solar offered the advantage of being able to 'grow' with our needs provided the core design was sound. A number of consultants offered packages ranging in cost from \$12,000 to \$18,000. When quizzed, it was apparent that most of them had little design experience, they merely marketed



After delivery of our lock-up stage factory-built dwelling we had lots of homework to do before we developed a viable cost-effective alternative power system.

packages put together by component importers/manufacturers.

I decided that was a lot of money to pay for second-hand expertise. So out came the calculator, specification/data sheets on components and consumption details of all electrical equipment we proposed using.

Consumption figures were worked out adding a safety margin of 50 per cent. Using heavy consumption items such as washing machines, fridges, freezers and heaters from the AC power source was ruled out, as most inverters produce a square wave rather than a sine wave which can upset motors. Motors on average also need a 'kick start' of around

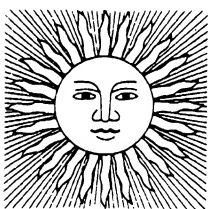
six times their normal continuous running current so it's quite a shock to inverters.

Gas, yes, good old-fashioned gas. An LPG fridge (no moving parts), water heater and cooker would be reliable, reasonably cheap to run and efficient. The heavy load question was mostly answered. Solar hot water was considered, but the amount of hot water required by two people didn't warrant the cost of the unit and would be better employed elsewhere.

Having arrived at consumption (load) figures, the question of system voltage had to be answered. The relative pros and cons of 12 volts versus 24 volts were analysed and we opted for 24 volts. Considerable savings can be made in

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US-21	Rigid	928	383	32	3.00	1.6	\$239
US-11	Rigid	491	383	22	1.63	0.8	\$179
USF-32	Flex	1430	425	5	2.14	2.5	\$449
USF-11	Flex	554	425	5	0.91	0.8	\$199
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halving the size of wiring and switches. There's half the battery drain and subsequent extended life, greater efficiency of the inverter and less volts drop through the system. (Ohms Law = double the voltage half the current.)

Most of the 'experts' suggested the whole household be powered through an inverter. We didn't agree. Should a fault manifest itself in the inverter, all power would be lost. An inverter used to power lighting is a waste. Most inverters are only 80-85 percent efficient and it seemed silly to try and maximise the stored capacity of batteries only to fritter it away unnecessarily. In some cases this 'wasted' capacity could represent a day of power when the sun is not in evidence.

A split system was voted for. Lighting would be powered directly from the batteries and the power circuit from the inverter. Fluorescent lights were installed where general lighting was required (kitchen, bathroom etc). Twenty-four volt solid state fluoro starters were fitted to standard fittings with ordinary tubes (they're available in 20 and 40 watt). Lamps were modified with 24 volt quartz halogen bulbs – these are rated at 20 watt and provide a brilliant white light. Adapters are available so they can be used in normal bayonet cap fittings.

We have seen many attempts at providing water pressure via gravity-feed systems, all involving major engineering feats of erecting a header tank etc. Little thought seems to be given to the fact that water has to be pumped to the header tank in the first place and requires a reasonably large pump to obtain the head. All too often (mostly at night), the tank decides to empty itself, frequently mid-shower, causing much ranting and raving and gnashing of teeth. Our solution was to

use a 24 volt marine diaphragm pump to provide mains water pressure from the storage tanks, which ensures abundant water at all times. After all, why pump water to a header tank when a small pressure pump would do a better job at considerably less cost in terms of engineering and battery drain? A 20 litre accumulator tank was installed to minimise cycling when taps are turned on. This system provides 32 PSI which is also handy for emergency back-up fire fighting.

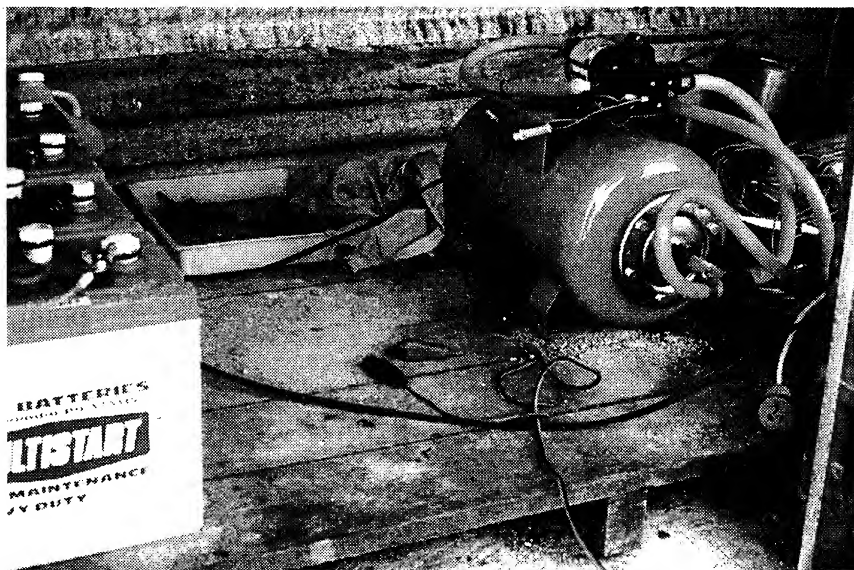
Currently 4 x 60 watt panels are used, giving approximately 9 amps to charge the batteries. They feed through an 18 amp regulator, allowing us to double the number of panels in due course. A distribution panel was constructed containing an ammeter to monitor the solar charge and another to keep an eye on the load. Fuses for all circuits are also mounted on this panel plus switches to allow the solar panels to be isolated should the batteries need a boost from the generator.

The heart of the system consists of 4 x 6 volt 230 ampere-hour deep cycle (golf buggy) batteries giving approximately seven days of reserve should cloudy conditions exist.

Providing 240 volt AC is a 200 watt continuous, 800 watt peak inverter. It has auto start, low voltage and overload protection and will happily drive a TV, VCR, computer and small kitchen appliances. We decided not to use a much larger inverter for reasons to be explained later.

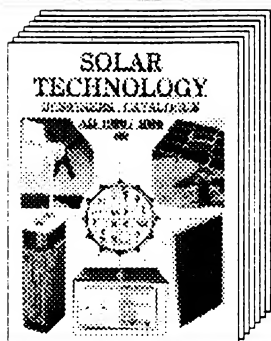
To run the washing machine (twin tub), vacuum cleaner and larger power tools a 1 kW generator is used. This has provision for battery charging and is used mainly on washdays. It's cheap to run at only 50 cents per hour.

The system has been running for a little over six years with utter reliability. Cost to set up was \$3200, a bit better than \$12,000 minimum! Two suspect batteries were replaced during this period at a cost of \$240. Water heating,



An accumulator or reservoir tank connected to the marine diaphragm pump holds about twenty litres of pressurised water and maintains the pressure to the gas hot water system

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cooking and cooling LPG costs average \$10 per week.

We often wonder why such a fuss is made of the necessity for mains power or all the mystique of alternative power promoted by some with vested interests. The key to developing a system is to do your research based on your needs. Compile a library of alternative power material, be very generous in your estimates, see other systems in operation and ask lotsa questions. Thoroughly know your system in intimate detail so you can fix it. Most electricians have little experience of alternative power generation and therefore it can be quite expensive for you to pay for their learning curve should you call them out to fix problems.

### POWERFUL TIPS

The following tips may assist you when designing your system.

#### Solar Panels

Panels should all match and be fitted with a diode to prevent the batteries discharging through them when the sun isn't shining. Even if you have a regulator, diodes are an extra safeguard.

Self-regulating panels are not necessary if you use a separate regulator, they add to the cost and are potential sources of breakdown – the simpler, the better. Earth the frame to minimise the lightning strike damage; earthing also helps minimise static interference to radios etc. The mounting brackets should be adjustable in order to angle the panels for the winter and summer sun therefore maximising their light capture.

#### Batteries

Always use deep cycle batteries which match, not truck batteries as these are designed for rapid charge/discharge. Connect them in series, never parallel. Use a hydrometer to check the specific gravity of each cell on a regular basis. The reading should be around 1250 for a fully charged battery. If a cell fails to reach this reading it may mean the cell is duff. Good cells will tend to discharge into a poor cell and adversely affect the system's voltage/capacity. Merely taking voltage readings of suspect cells is unreliable; take the battery to a friendly local battery dealer for a cell load test. Always keep batteries clean and dry as volt leakage can occur through moisture and dirt. Adequate ventilation is a must

as lead acid batteries on charge produce hydrogen gas which has a habit of making you medium rare if ignited! To avoid using lead links to connect batteries, simply cut 13 mm copper tubing (the plumbing type) to the desired length, flatten each end, drill holes in the flattened part, smear with petroleum jelly and bolt to the terminals. Environmentally friendly and cheap!

#### Inverters

Inverters should have auto start, under-voltage and overload protection. The under-voltage feature can save the cost of ruined batteries because it's very difficult to bring deep cycle batteries back to life if they've been absolutely flattened. We would not recommend buying an inverter with a capacity way beyond your actual needs. Add 50 percent as a safety/reliability margin. As stated previously, most inverters are about 80 - 85 percent efficient. Couple this with the performance graph (look at brochures/fact sheets) to see that many inverters are most efficient running at 50 - 60 percent + of their continuous rating. Our 24 volt 200 watt inverter takes 1.9 amps from the batteries running a colour TV, even less driving a computer.

#### Wiring

Normal house wiring is perfectly suitable for accepting the inverter AC. It is not recommended for 12 volt DC. You'll find significant volts drop and the AC switches are prone to burning out. Twelve volt equipment (radios, fans, TVs etc) designed for vehicle use and then used in an alternative system can further compound the volts drop problems in that their design generally requires 13.8 volts DC for optimum operation. Therefore, if 12 volt equipment is used with normal house

wiring and there's a voltage drop of say 10 percent, you're trying to power a 13.8 volt DC device with only 10.71 volts DC – tends to make things a little hot under the collar! If you use mains wiring 24 volts is a better proposition (as in a split lighting system). Volts drop will be minimised and the existing switches should suffice because there'll be less arcing and greater reliability.

#### Generators

Again the rule is to select a generator adequate to your needs. A five or seven KVA generator may not ever have its capacity tested, so unless you're running an arc welder, why pay the extra expense and running costs of a Rolls Royce when you only need a push bike! A generator is happiest running at least 50 percent of its capacity. When this does not happen, the slip rings can 'glaze', resulting in unnecessary expense. Needless to say, a battery charging facility is a must. You can give the batteries a friendly 'touch up' while doing the washing or vacuuming if required. Of course, a smaller generator is much easier to start and you avoid the added complication of electric starting as with a larger machine.

#### Water Heaters

You could opt for either stored capacity (Rheem or like), or an 'on demand' variety. Either one requires constant water pressure – another advantage of having a pressure pump.

#### Fridge/Freezers

LPG fridges/freezers are reliable, efficient and quiet, sure they're a little more expensive but they'll last a lifetime. Normal mains fridges/freezers can be converted to run on 12 or 24 volt DC and are worth considering if you are reluctant to dispose of your kitchen favourite.



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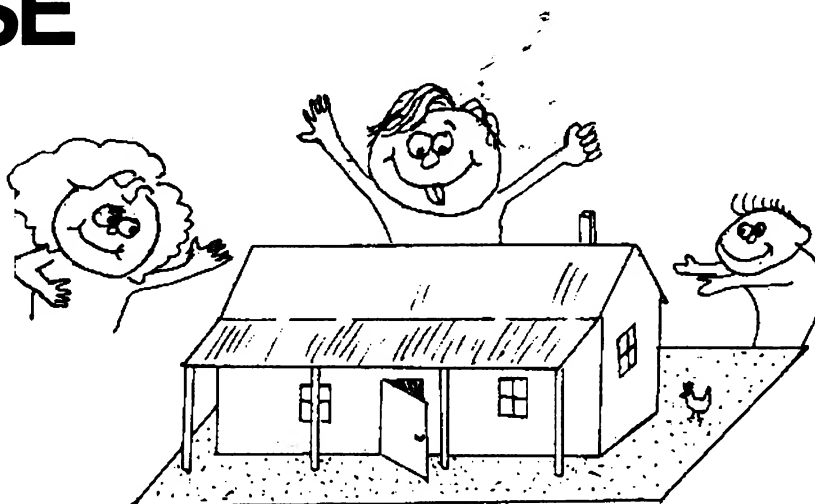
# GINGERBREAD FARMHOUSE

by Heather Kozak, Dellicknora, Vic.

Whether you live in one, or just wish you did, the old Australian farmhouse with the front verandah is one of the romantic images of our country. What better subject to choose for a memorable, edible Christmas centrepiece? Gingerbread keeps very well, so you can start well in advance for this easier-than-it-looks project. The size of the house is limited only by the size of your oven and the plans can be scaled up or down accordingly.

Make up the gingerbread dough and roll it out no thinner than half a centimetre (it needs to be thicker than gingerbread men for strength). Using a ruler or a cardboard template, cut out the floor rectangle and bake. Repeat the process for each wall and roof section. Do one piece a day if it seems too daunting to bake them one after the other.

Start with a board at least 20 centimetres larger than the floor section. Cover the board with foil or Christmas paper.



*Yah! A Gingerbread House*

Pipe liberal amounts of icing around the edges of the floor piece and stick on a straight wall section and a pointed one simultaneously. The two angles of the walls will hold each other up. Pipe icing up the vertical join between the wall sections, working inside the house for a neater finish. Add the other two walls in the same way and leave to set and harden.

Pipe more icing along all top edges of the walls, including the pointy bits, and lay the roof slabs on each diagonal slope. Cut a door in the front with a very sharp knife and re-attach it with icing, half open. Pipe icing under the long edge of the verandah piece and stick it to the roof at the front of the house.

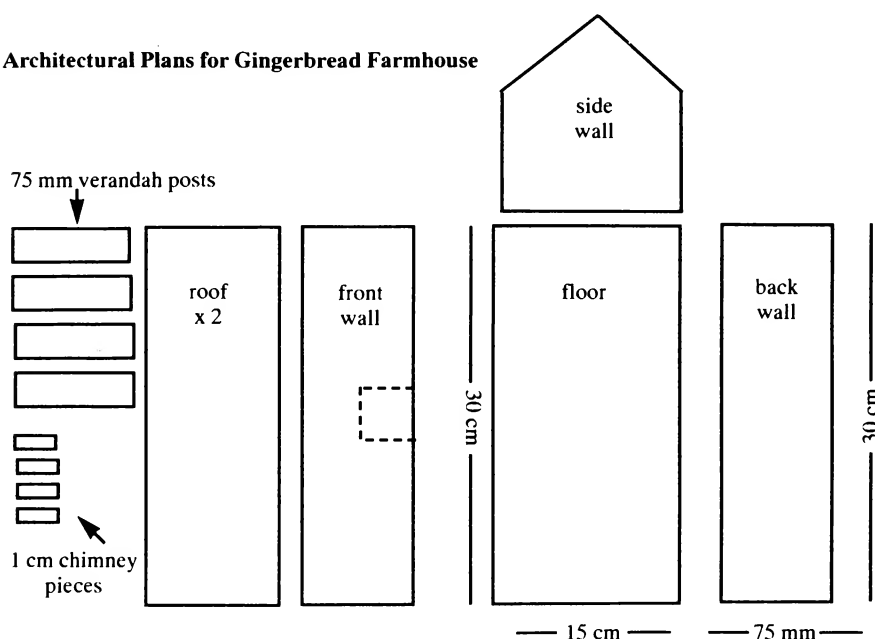
You can use thick twigs cut to lengths as verandah posts, or baked gingerbread ones. Stick the posts to the underneath of the verandah corners with icing as well as sticking them to your board at the bottoms.

Now let your imagination go wild – add a chimney made from four little rectangles iced together, grass made from tossing coconut with a few drops of green food colouring, a dusty yard by sprinkling cocoa powder on the board, marzipan farm animals. I mixed up some different coloured icings and with a fine nozzled piping bag piped wisteria climbing up the house walls, bird's nest on the roof and curtained windows.

A bark roof could be simulated by sticking grated chocolate to the roof, or a traditional European snow scene created with white icing snow complete with icicles dangling from the roof edges.

Use your favourite gingerbread recipe, or try the one in GR58, p62.

## Architectural Plans for Gingerbread Farmhouse





# SOAPY SUBSTITUTES

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

'Cleanliness is next to Godliness,' goes the old saying and throughout history civilised people have practised some form of hygiene, usually encouraged by religion or by society values.

Although water was always considered the major cleanser it was never enough. To remove certain stains and substances from skin or clothing early peoples felt something more was needed.

An ancient stone tablet circa 3000 BC, found by archaeologists while excavating one of the ancient Mediterranean cities of Sumeria, lists a simple recipe for soap: '... mix 1 part oil with 5 1/2 parts pot ash.'

The Roman Empire used a soap made from goats' fat and wood ash boiled together. This soft potash mixture was then hardened by treating it with salt. The result was a primitive form of soap.

A mysterious substance known as 'strootin', used by the ancients as a form of soap, is thought by modern scholars to be the herb known today as soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*). The roots contain a viscous oily substance which lathers easily

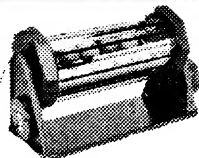
in hot water. The plant is still used today in various parts of Europe for washing clothes. It is also used commercially in some shampoos.

There are quite a number of simple substances that can be used in place of commercial or homemade soap:

- Blackwood leaves (*Acacia melanoxylon*) rolled into tight spheres and dipped in water will froth and clean dirty, greasy hands.
- Bran, the outside coat of the wheat grain, makes an excellent cleaner. It contains starch which gives a stiffening action and mineral salts which will prevent colours from running. When heated it can be used to dry-clean light-coloured fabrics, felts and furs.
- Coffee grains can be used to clean hands or aluminium saucepans, and makes an excellent fertiliser for plants in pots and window boxes.
- Cornflour, by itself or mixed with water, salt or raw potato.
- Earth or mud – the axiom that it takes a thief to catch a thief applies here. Dirt or mud with water will remove dirt or mud – but be careful of harmful bacteria.

- Gorse ashes mixed with water and shaped into balls makes a good soap substitute.
- Olive oil, about half a cup mixed with enough white sugar to form a thin paste, removes dirt and grease and softens the hands as well.
- Raw potato rubbed into the hands cleans and makes the skin smooth and soft.
- Rolled oats make a quick form of soap or hand cleanser. Take a handful of rolled oats and add enough water to form a paste, rub thoroughly into the hands and rinse.
- Salt is a good cleaner by itself or mix with other substances.
- Sand is a good grease remover, especially when mixed with raw potato.
- Sawdust, by itself or moistened with lemon juice, methylated spirits or water, cleans paint-stained hands.
- Sodium carbonate or bicarbonate of soda removes stains from fabric, carpet, chinaware, cutlery, concrete, cleans glass and dental plates and unblocks housepipes.
- Stale bread, wet or dry, cleans hands, removes mildew and fruit juice stains, and cleans jewellery.

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**Frame** - Mild black angle iron & flat steel.  
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**Netting** - 25mm x 25mm chook netting.  
**Wheels** - 250mm x 77mm pneumatic (no wheels on 3 chook).  
**Paint** - Dulux black.

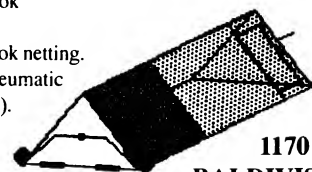
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by Tony Davis, Grenfell, NSW.

After seeing the article in GR122 about tandem bikes I thought readers might be interested in some more ideas on homebuilt bikes.

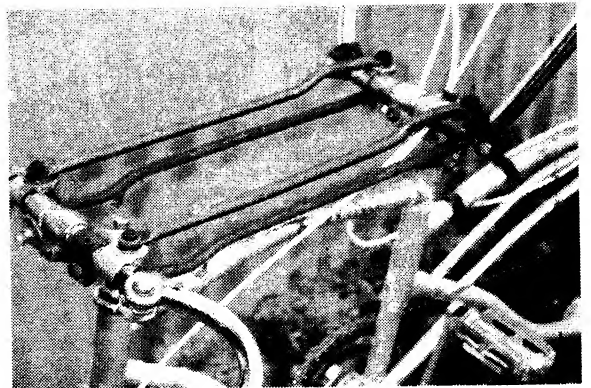
Bike number one (see photo) is half dragster/half recumbent and is just two dragster frames, one small one big, braised together with oxy. Steering is by four seat stays off old bikes (or lengths of steel or pipe) with seat clamps from old seats – you need twelve of them. It goes: bolt, steel washer, stay, washer, clamp, handlebars, washer, stay, washer, nut, nut. The last nut is the locknut. Both goosenecks are the same size, back handlebars are dragster steerhorn type, front are off a girl's bike. Leave whole so you can add mirrors and lights. There are six clamps on each handlebar, eight are only used as stops.

When put together, tighten up the nuts, not too tight or too loose, to get your steering just right, then put your locknuts on. Leave the expander bolt on the back gooseneck, but don't do it up too tight and do up the seat tube bolt to get rid of any play in the gooseneck, but

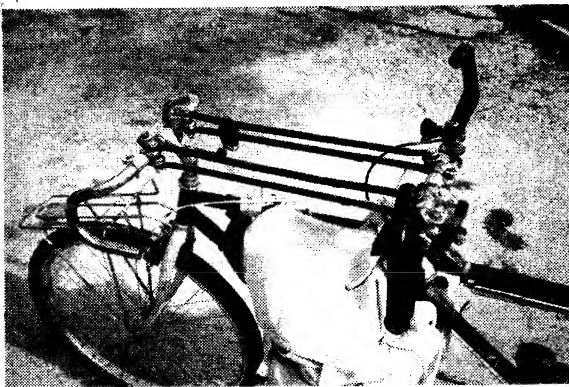


Above: Bike number one, half dragster/half recumbent.

Right: Detail of steering apparatus for bike one. Below Right: Bike number two, known as Long Rider.



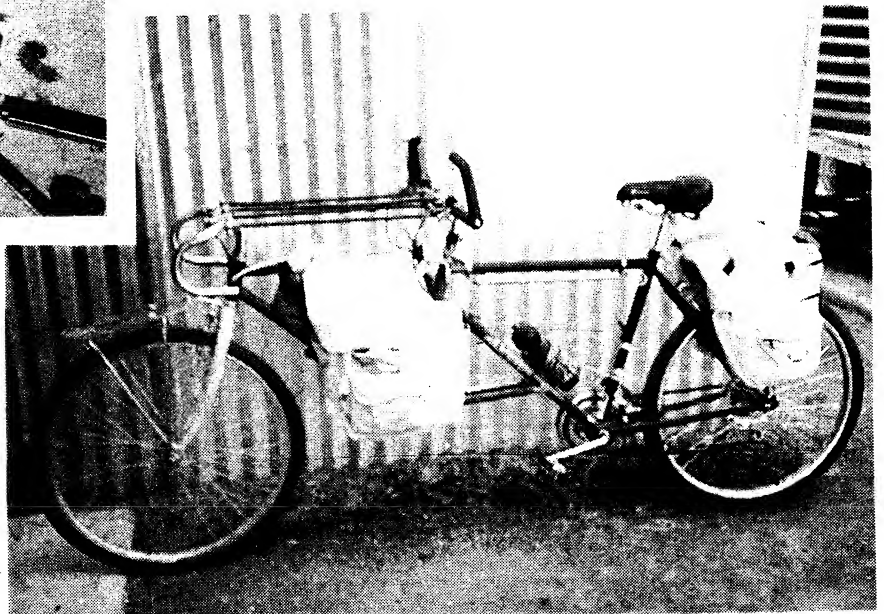
Left: Detail of steering and saddlebags on bike two.



you will still have some.

The cranks are off a 27 ten-speed cotter pin type racer. The wheels are 20 175. Forks are off a BMX. BMX front brake, dragster back brake. Gears are friction type, 10 speed, Dragster L-seat and U-bar (sissy bar). Chain length is one full ten-speed chain plus another half – experiment to get right length.

Once all together this bike is a dream to ride, takes a little bit to get used to, but is great fun – the Harley of the bike



world. It's cheap to make, plus it can be converted into a tandem or cargo bike. Remove steering, seat, U-bar. Put BMX gooseneck handlebars, a long seat pole and ordinary seat and tie two freezer baskets on each side of the rack. The rack is made from seat stays and U-bars and bolted together.

Number two bike is a 26" Malvern Star mountain bike and a 24" mountain bike frame braised together, bigger steering rods, same size goosenecks, except I cut up an old set of forks for the top tube which the back gooseneck fits into snugly. It goes in the 24" frame's seat tube. Tighten the bolt so it won't slip

down in the frame. This one is a fifteen-speed index with bar ends, racks and saddlebags. Front bags are just backpacks tied together. The bike I call a Long Rider takes a while to get used to, but handles well when loaded, can be used to get your shopping or go touring. Both bikes are head turners, everybody looks.

.....

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# COOL BABY

by Marie Podger, Kurrajong Heights, NSW.

*Grass Roots hints for a  
happy healthy baby,  
naturally.*



It always makes me smile to read the letters that appear regularly in Feedback that begin, 'We are expecting our first baby soon . . .' They bring back to me that wondrous time of waiting, hoping, dreaming, celebrating and occasionally panicking, that led up to the arrival of our own firstborn, Benjamin. Two years later I still look at him in amazement and say, Imagine! That was you in there all that time, and we didn't even know you! As any parent would agree, once your little one is with you, here in the outside world, it seems as though you've been together forever.

But back to the letters. So many readers ask how they can care for their coming babes using natural, gentle methods that I thought I would share some of my own experiences and discoveries. No doubt, as in every other aspect of parenting, you'll soon find the ways of doing things that work best for you and yours, but it's nice to have a place to start.

## **NAPPIES**

I have no intention of rehashing the Great Nappy Debate, which has been

covered, in GR and elsewhere, so many times before. But whether you choose cloths or 'disposables', Bub's little bot will need cleaning at change time. The best way of doing this is to promise absolutely anything to your partner if they'll do it. Failing that, facecloths and plain water will do the job, are infinitely re-usable, can be warmed in winter and don't involve added chemicals or packaging. If you choose to use 'baby wipes' – and they are really useful for days out and travelling – avoid those which contain alcohol and perfumes. Not only do they smell nearly as bad as what you are trying to clean up, they can also cause nasty reactions on sensitive baby skin. The only time Ben ever had a severe nappy-area rash was when we used a 'no-name' brand of wipes in an away-from-home emergency. The fact that just being near them induced a sneezing attack in me should have been warning enough not to let them anywhere near him! We have used Soul Pattinson's own brand, which is unperfumed, reasonably priced and contains chamomile extract, with no problems. Unfortunately these are not

available in a soft refill pack, so regular use would involve a lot of plastic waste. There are only so many plastic dispensers for which you can think of a brilliant new use! (plant pots, pencil cases, storing nuts and bolts . . .) I have written to the manufacturer about this, but received no reply. You should write too if you strike such a situation! We need to tell manufacturers what we want; some brands of wipes already come in soft refill packs to help reduce wastage.

If your babe is prone to nappy rash, a simple zinc and castor oil cream acts as a moisture barrier. Amcal chemists sell an unperfumed basic version which does the job admirably, as do other chains. Try adding a little tea tree or lavender oil to the water when cleaning the nappy area; this can help with the bacteria and the fungal problems which are the main culprits with irritation. Lotions containing calendula, comfrey and/or chamomile are healing and soothing. You can buy them at health food stores and some supermarkets. Penaten cream is one brand my friends swear by; it contains arnica, and is useful for all sorts of things for the whole family. Good old Lucas' Pawpaw Ointment, the

traveller's best friend, is another product with a fan club. Alternatively, make up your own lotions using a neutral base such as sorbolene, blended with the required herbs or infusions. Sorbolene is, I believe, derived from petrochemical ingredients, but is recommended by dermatologists as a gentle cleanser and moisturiser. As with most products, some people may be allergic to it, so take the usual precautions.

## NAPPY WASH

So now that Bubba is clean-bummed and suitably anointed, a word about that cloth nappy you may have chosen to use. Many commercially available nappy wash products are unsuitable for use in septic systems. If you use one, read the label first! They're not always necessary; you can rinse the nappies and put them in a bucket of water with half a cup of white vinegar (cheap no-frills variety) added. Soak until ready to wash. A hot wash cycle will help with hygiene if you can spare the power; we never could, so cold it was. Add a dash of tea tree, thyme or lavender oil to the final rinse, if you like. Another splash of vinegar at this stage acts as a fabric softener.

Now for the most important, scientific, high-tech part: hang them out in the sun! Leave them there for several hours, if you can. Sunlight is a proven, highly effective sterilising agent, at least as good as that smelly polluting stuff all those ads say you need! It will also assist with whitening. If you live somewhere dark and gloomy, or your town just won this year's Golden Gumboot Award, you might want to rethink the nappy wash products or go back to the good old-fashioned method of firing up the copper and giving them a boil. And remember, nappies don't have to be blindingly white in order to be clean and sterile.

Resist the temptation to decide that Bub would look much groovier if the nappies were green or purple or tie-dye. The reason they're white is that the colour of the urine can be an indicator of health; you need to be able to see it.

## BATH PRODUCTS

If you've given birth in a hospital, you may have received a 'gift' bag of free samples: baby soap, baby shampoo, baby oil, baby lotion, baby massage gel. Aaaaargh! The promotional campaigns would have us believe that if we don't use this stuff in copious amounts, we are failing in our duties as parents. Forget it. A couple of these may be worth keeping (smell them, try them yourself), but most popular baby care products are overpriced, overperfumed and overrated. Make a nice little parcel out of them and give them to St Vinnies or the Smith Family, or the lady down the street. So how will you clean your baby, then? With water! Most of the time, warm water is enough to cleanse beautiful baby skin. When they've managed to cover themselves in something really hideous, as they inevitably will, use a pure unperfumed vegetable oil soap, sorbolene cream or a mild soapless cleansing agent from the chemist. A little muslin or stocking bag, filled with rolled oats and either used as a soft scrubber or placed in the water to diffuse its milky liquid, is a lovely gentle cleanser; it is also soothing to the nerves. Try it in your own bath too; you could probably use some soothing at this stage! The daily all-over lather-up and hair wash should not be necessary. Let Bub spend bath time relaxing in the warm water and enjoying your touch. Best of all, when you can, use the big bath and hop in yourself. Ben loved being zoomed up and down the tub or

just cuddled skin-to-skin. It's hard to believe now that he was ever small enough.

To wash hair, again water is usually sufficient. Even now, Ben rarely gets shampooed (though he's old enough to find the word itself pretty hilarious!). His hair is clean and soft, and hasn't been stimulated into the overproduction of oil by harsh cleansing. I do use conditioner though, as his cherubic blonde ringlets tend to turn into natty dreadlocks without it.

## POWDER

Once dry, it's traditional to dust baby with a huge cloud of baby powder. Don't do it! Not only is it bad for everyone's lungs, with possible links to lung cancer, it is also expensive, and covers up that gorgeous, perfect, freshly-washed-baby smell. In hot weather, to prevent chafing, you can use a dusting of good old cornflour instead. Make sure you dry baby well first, to avoid the batter effect, then apply in all those little creases. We bought one of those cheap icing sugar or cocoa shakers from the supermarket; it was ideal for storing and applying the powder. A friend went one better, with a picnic salt shaker which seals firmly and can be thrown in the bag when travelling.

## BABY OIL

Is Bub's skin a little dry? Head for the grocery department. Olive oil is excellent and cheap. Sweet almond oil is even better. The latter is available in good supermarkets; it's not really cheap at about \$6 for 250 ml, but a little goes a very long way. Use as a moisturiser, add to the bath water (careful with that slippery, wriggly baby, though), enjoy it as a massage oil. Use it yourself too; you deserve some pampering and so does



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your partner. If you go for the olive oil, you might want to choose the 'light' variety, otherwise Bub might end up smelling like a Jumbo Spanish Black!

A little oil massaged into the scalp will also loosen up the crusty bits if cradle cap is a problem. Our Ben, who refused to grow any hair for a long time, had a bad case. An elderly lady my husband got talking to in the supermarket (this happens all the time when you have a new baby) advised smearing his scalp thickly with butter, leaving it for a day, and then scraping it off with a piece of cardboard! Damian thought this sounded like a great idea, and was all set to try it out, but as the weather was very hot and I still had vivid memories of rancid yak butter hair dressings in Tibet, I vetoed the plan! Eventually, the cradle cap cleared up pretty much on its own, as these things tend to do. Come to think of it though, I don't remember ever seeing a little Tibetan baby with cradle cap.

#### SUNBURN

Of course, we all try to prevent this from happening, but it's amazing how quickly

a brand new skin can burn, even from reflected rays when in the shade. If this happens, immersion in a cool bath, followed by liberal application of aloe vera gel, is your best bet. It soothes and calms the skin instantly. Make sure Bub gets plenty of fluids, too. Keep a tube of gel, or even better a plant, handy all the time. Of course, if burns are severe or Bub is feverish and uncomfortable, you'll get straight to the doctor.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

There are a bunch of other things which we have discovered along the way and swear by. Here are a few of them.

Babies would rather shake an old plastic bottle full of rice than play with a toy you've mortgaged your house to buy.

A mini-Mouli food grinder or a sieve and a bit of effort turns small amounts of grown-up food into delicious, baby tucker. Babies are very accepting of strange combinations like pear, spinach and cream cheese. They love avocado with yoghurt, carrot and apple, mashed potato and banana. Mmmm! Weird, but good.

Harle's Herbal Teething and Colic syrups are magic; Brauer's Nervatona syrup is a soothing, safe homoeopathic tonic I took myself when necessary as a stressed new mother.

A doctor who genuinely likes kids, can handle being thrown up on (by baby, not you) and isn't fazed by panicked first-time parents mistaking mozzie bites for chicken pox is worth his or her weight in gold.

Babies are very forgiving of early fumbling attempts at parenting; they are also tougher than you think.

Listen to your own common sense and gut feelings above any other advice you get, including this article.

Time begged, borrowed or stolen away from the baby, house, spouse, to spend doing something just for yourself, or doing nothing at all, is essential to your sanity. This in turn is good for everyone around you.

Most of all, you'll need a sense of humour as big as the planet, a heart as big as the universe for all the new love and joy you'll find, and the insiders' knowledge that yes, it really does get easier as you go along. Enjoy!



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# A MODERN COOLGARDIE SAFE

by Jack Miller, Revesby, NSW.

I thought some readers might be interested in a modern version of a Coolgardie safe that I have made to keep food and drinks cool. For those who are not familiar with the concept, they work on evaporation, like a breeze blowing on a canvas water bag.

## HOW TO MAKE

### Materials

You will need a white 25 litre square drum and the bottom 14-15 centimetres of a similar drum, 4 eyebolts with nuts, penny or mudguard washers, same size washers made out of rubber car tube to stop water leaking out of top drum, some dog chain or similar and D-bolt to hang unit under shade, some hessian, string, 2 plastic or brass hinges (these don't rust) and a double hung window sash lock, the type that locks the top and bottom window together.

I have fitted a plastic tap to the safe part of the unit. You will also need a small flyscreen frame, 4 corner pieces to join the framing, and a strip of round

plastic insert to hold the hessian to the inside of the door frame.

### Method

Mount cut-off bottom part of drum (this will hold the water) on top of the 25 litre drum, drill four holes through both of these which are then joined together with eye bolts, nuts, metal and rubber washers. Cut a piece out of each of the four sides of the 25 litre drum, leaving the corners and frames as shown in the photograph. Drill  $\frac{1}{8}$ " holes around three of these openings, leaving the fourth opening for your door.

Cut hessian and sew to the three openings that you have drilled around, this is where the string is used. Make your door out of aluminium flyscreen frame, but cover it with hessian on this side also, not flywire. Fit hinges to door and drum. Fit window catch also. Fill top drum with water then add four strips of towelling to water. The ends are then draped over each of the four hessian sides and you have a cooler that costs nothing to run.



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# NOT A CREATURE WAS STIRRING

## MOUSE STOCKING

by Pamela Odijk, photograph by Herman Odijk, Bribie Island, QLD.



- approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  metre of matching material.
- approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  metre of contrasting material to make the Seminole stripping.
- small amount of quilting padding
- small square of material for making the mouse
- 1 pair of 10 mm sew-in eyes.
- embroidery cotton, pink and black and one other colour
- matching machine cotton.

You can choose for yourself the kind of Seminole patchwork stripping you wish to make, but the simplest is as shown in the first diagram on page 16, GR129, using a Christmas print as the centre 5 cm strip. Then:

Add side strips of the Christmas fabric 5 cm wide.

Add to this again, side strips of material chosen for the stocking in a colour which complements the Christmas print (the one depicted in the photograph is green).

Cut a piece of completed Seminole strip 28 cm long, to form the leg of the stocking.

Now cut two 12.75 x 48.25 cm strips in the plain coloured material. Transfer the words, 'Not a creature was stirring', onto one, and the words, 'Not even a . . . ' onto the other using dressmakers' carbon. The lettering can be traced from an alphabet or embroidery book, or you can write it freehand. Trim the first strip approximately the same size as the completed Seminole strip as this goes across the top of the stocking. Leave the other one as it is at this stage.

Embroider over the printing with embroidery thread (two threads at a time) using stem stitch.

Pin and stitch the completed 'Not a creature was stirring' strip to the top of the 28 cm Seminole strip, further trimming to size if necessary.

Attach a Seminole strip at right angles to the bottom of the first strip, to form the 'foot' of the stocking. Stitch into place,

right sides together. Open and press.

• Fold the 'Not even a . . .' embroidered strip so the embroidery is visible and turn under the raw edges.

Place this diagonally across the 'foot' of the stocking, allowing edges to overlap stocking edges (you can trim it to size later), but leaving room to attach the mouse. Pin into place, tack and sew very carefully along the edges of the strip with your sewing machine. This piece is actually applied or sewn over the stocking shape.

Now cut the stocking foot into shape, keeping it in proportion to the leg, and rounding the toe and heel.

## Make the Mouse

Cut two pieces as per diagram.

With right sides together, sew around the outline (twice to ensure it does not fray), leaving space at the side of the head to enable the mouse to be turned right side out. Turn.

Stuff the mouse with polyester toy filling or similar and top-sew the opening closed.

Attach eyes, 10 mm.

Embroider the nose with pink embroidery thread using chain stitch. Add whiskers with three strands of thick tapestry thread or wool, tying knots at the ends.

Attach the mouse in position to the stocking as shown in the photograph, by stitching securely through the back, catching a fair amount of filling in each stitch. This will prevent little fingers from pulling the mouse off!

### To Complete the Stocking

Cut a backing piece of material for the stocking as well as a padding piece, both the same size as the stocking front.

Place the padding on a flat surface. Place the stocking top on top of the padding, right side up. On top of this place the stocking back, right side down, that is, facing the right side of the stocking front. Pin through all thicknesses, leaving the stocking top open to enable the whole lot to be turned right side out through the top.

The striking simplicity of the patchwork coupled with a quote from one of our favourite Christmas poems – plus the mouse of course – make this decoration very appealing, especially to children.

It consists of two Seminole strips with extra side strips attached, placed at right angles to each other then trimmed to shape, decorated with two strips of embroidery (and a mouse), padded and backed. It's as simple as that!

- You'll need to consult my article in GR129, p15-16, for instructions on how to make Seminole patchwork.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR STOCKING

## Materials Needed

- approximately 1/2 metre of Christmas print.

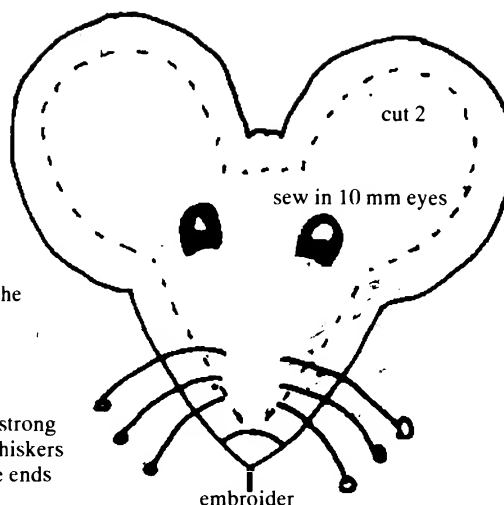
Sew around the stocking through all thicknesses leaving the top open.

Turn stocking right side out through the top opening. The padding will now be between the two pieces of material. Press.

Make a loop from which to hang the stocking from a leftover piece of stripping and insert this into the left-hand top opening.

Turn under a small hem on the front and back of the stocking top. Pin front and back together, making sure the hanging loop is firmly secured. Sew along the top with your machine and continue right around the outside edge for a neat finish.

# Mouse Pattern



enlarge pattern to the size you want

attach strong wool whiskers and tie ends

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# KEYLINE EXPERIENCE

by Rix Wright, Delegate, NSW.

When P A Yeomans devised his Keyline Plan in the 1950s he opened the door to a new epoch in Australian agriculture. Never before had we such a comprehensive system of land development. The scale of application seems unlimited, relating as it does to such a vast variety of land forms, from mountain terrains to those which, to the eye, would appear totally flat. Such was the vision and determination of this man that he was able to counter official theories that much of our impoverished land was fairly useless and not worthy of improvement.

After years of experimentation Yeomans was able to turn infertile soil into high-class agricultural land. With the correct use of tined implements and noninversion tillage he was able to work in harmony with nature's cycles rather than resorting to costly and often destructive chemical applications. In addition, all excess run-off rainfall was harnessed, being directed by diversion channels to large dams. Pipes with a diameter of 300 millimetres or more, beneath the dam wall, enabled gravity irrigation to take place over large areas down country from the dams. This gave total water control to the catchment. In hill country the channel from the base of any dam wall ran at a gradient of 1 in 300 to flood the area by gravity. Great care was taken to induce the flow out onto ridges evenly by the pattern of cultivation, often running at 45 degrees to the contour where necessary. Parched earth was soaked with the equivalent of 50 millimetres of rain and rapid plant growth with the ensuing soil development followed.

## 'KNOCKALONG' BEFORE AND AFTER KEYLINE

Most of our 'Knockalong' property was a Soldier Settler block acquired by my father Edgar Wright when he returned from active service in World War 1. The country was light shale, mostly steep and heavily timbered with peppermint and other eucalypt varieties. Topsoil was

almost nonexistent, but as areas of trees were ringbarked, as was the custom, grass appeared and Merino sheep were successfully grazed for wool production. Most of our land had been valued at six shillings and eight pence per acre in 1918. The valuer told my father he would be lucky to do much with it because of its total deficiencies of minerals, trace elements and all else. This presented a challenge to my father who had ultimate faith in his venture.

Over the years the danger of stock baring the land with the diminishing trees became apparent from observation of neighbouring properties. In some cases trees grew back in jungle proportions, creating even bigger problems.

In my early twenties, having decided to continue in my father's footsteps, I wrote to various government authorities asking for guidelines in clearing the land which would ensure retention of sufficient trees, yet allow the majority of the place to pasture sheep in a practical way. I was advised to leave steep slopes

in timber and particularly the deeper gullies and water courses. This was obviously not the answer as run-off increased on the steep slopes from the bare ground under the trees, only to wash in deepening holes along the tree-lined gullies. So much for government remedies!

Where bare depleted hillsides had begun to erode, we were advised to hire a bulldozer and put in contour banks. This duly took place, resulting in headward erosion, previously nonexistent, above the banks, and wholesale destruction where pooled water eventually burst out, either tunnel eroding through the clay banks or blowing out at the ends. Banks were not the answer.

On some of our ringbarked hills, my father laid the dead trees in contours to hold the soil. In time, tree seedlings emerged along the lines of logs, making a more permanent barrier against erosion.

It was about this time in 1955 that a friend drew my attention to a scheme where belts of trees were retained in



Keyline hillside channel irrigation. Movable 'flags' arrest water flowing along the channel by gravity. Water then spreads evenly over pattern-cultivated paddock.

contours and intervening land cultivated with a chisel plough parallel to the belts. Here was our solution to correct clearing practices at last! The friend gave me the book, *The Keyline Plan*, by P A Yeomans. I couldn't wait to go to Sydney and learn all I could from Mr Yeomans first hand. We went to his Richmond properties where a group of us joined the originator of Keyline on a farm walk around 'Nevallan'. Mr Yeomans explained all aspects of his early experiments to his enthusiastic audience.

In 1957 Mr Rick Dillon, who was Mr Yeomans' field officer, came up from Sydney and we took him over our 3300 acre property. He said we had great potential and took us through the first stages of a planning exercise. In the autumn of 1957 we cleared 270 acres with two bulldozers and a cable-rope, leaving contour belts of trees 20 metres wide at 13 metre vertical intervals. This was our first attempt at Keyline clearing and chisel ploughing. Pasture was sown parallel to and between the belts.

In 1958 my father, impressed with the results of the first area, had another 300 acres cleared, fenced, ploughed and sown. We were on our way! Over the succeeding seven years of Keyline development, without any irrigation, we doubled our wool clip.

In 1968, after a series of severe droughts, so typical of our southern Monaro region, I decided it was time for our first irrigation dam. Because dams over a certain size had to be licenced, I had to comply. If you help yourself to ward off droughts, the government taxes you for storing water even though those properties down country are not adversely affected!

Our first attempts at gravity-flood flow irrigation met with varied success. I was still chisel ploughing in contours so that water from the channel still concentrated in gully shapes when released, missing the ridges. After attending a Keyline school at Kiewa Valley in Victoria I learnt the finer rudiments of pattern ploughing and began to correct former mistakes. Now we could soak all areas below the irrigation channel evenly.

In 1971 we engaged Mr Yeomans' youngest son Ken to visit the property. He explained the linking significance of land shapes and particularly saddles, when seeking a suitable dam site. Suddenly a whole new world opened before my eyes. Wherever I went on any



Delving a new irrigation channel.

piece of land I saw its potential, with linking gully systems.

It was not long before we built a second irrigation dam, then in 1980, two more. The whole plan was beginning to come together. Waterways, tree belts, roads, subdivisions, fences, now an integrated whole.

Today, with the aid of the Yeomans Bunyip plough we are creating deeper soils in a rugged terrain. So much better than the old Graham Hoeme chisel plough, this one aerates deep down barely disturbing the surface. To walk on the ground, it is like a spring mattress or water bed. The Yeomans plough gives noninversion tillage. Its tines penetrate as deep as possible, doing their work below the surface and the only sign on top of the pasture is a slight lifting and tilting from the action of the tines. The ground is aerated and water can readily penetrate the centimetre slits in the surface to give the land an equivalent of 50 millimetres of rain when irrigated from the channel.

In 1985 we had a huge bushfire which burnt thirty-six properties,

including all of 'Knockalong'. What amazed us was our minimum loss of stock. On one side of us neighbours lost 1100 sheep and on the other 500. We merely lost 150 out of 3000! Our only losses were in two paddocks with scattered trees. These burnt down, falling on some of the sheep. On the rest of the place the Keyline tree belts acted as firebreaks, arresting and spreading the force of the fire. As the belts were consumed, the sheep were protected on the lee side. They then filtered back through the belts onto the burnt ground on the windward side, unharmed!

Keyline has been termed a number of things: landscape architecture, conceptual art and many more. To me it is all of these. Completing the plan is like stitching together all the components of a huge tapestry. Keyline is both logical and economically practical, as well as creating a landscape which is aesthetically beautiful. It requires patience and dedication, but what greater satisfaction could any land loving farmer possibly hope to achieve in a lifetime!

# CARE AND TRANSPORT OF PETS & LIVESTOCK IN A BUSHFIRE

by Graham Hind, Community Fireguard, Dandenong, Vic.

The care and transport of pets and livestock prior to, and during, the passage of a fire is rarely mentioned in any advice or information regarding personal and property bushfire preparedness and protection. But the loss of a loved pet is usually, especially for children, just as upsetting as the loss of a home and personal possessions. This heartache can be avoided if, when developing a family bushfire survival plan, pets and other livestock are included.

## SMALL ANIMALS

### Forward Planning

Ensure your dogs and cats are identified and registered with the local council to increase the chance of being re-united if you become separated.

Prepare for travel. Get your animals used to travel when young. Take them on regular car journeys so they are comfortable travelling and don't get carsick. Be sure that you can adequately restrain or confine your pet as if it becomes frightened it may panic.

### Dogs

Check you have leads, collars or harness, and a muzzle if the dog is aggressive.

### Cats, Rabbits, Guinea Pigs

A secure cage, or firmly tied pillow case or carry bag is needed.

### Birds, Ferrets, Mice

Move them in cages or secure boxes with small air holes.

### Fish

Transport in a large wide-necked jar with secure lid and fill two thirds with water (include a plastic straw to blow air into the water now and again).

### Snakes and Lizards

Use a container with a tight fitting lid with air holes, or put them into a firmly closed pillowcase or overnight bag.

### Frogs

A small covered tub with two centimetres of water in the bottom and air holes in the lid.

### Vaccination

Ensure your pets' vaccinations are up to

date in case they need to be boarded.

### Prepare an Evacuation Box

Include plastic bowls for water and food, small amount of food (dry food is best for cats and dogs), medication such as daily heartworm tablets, liner or newspaper.

An information list of your name, address, phone number, pet's name and vaccination history, medical information and food requirements, and your vet's phone number.

### On Days of High Risk

If you have to go to work decide whether to take your animals to a safer place before leaving home, as if there is a fire you may not be allowed home for some time.

If you are home, shut your pets inside the house so they are close by if you need to evacuate. Check your evacuation box and ensure you have leads or containers ready.

If you decide to evacuate, leave early while it is safe to do so and remain calm. Handle your pets firmly but reassuringly. Restrain dogs and confine other animals and cover cages with a woollen blanket or wet towel and secure all pets in the car. Remember to take the evacuation box. If you are caught in a fire while driving stay in the car with doors and windows closed. Cover yourself and the pets with woollen blankets and keep down below the level of the windows.

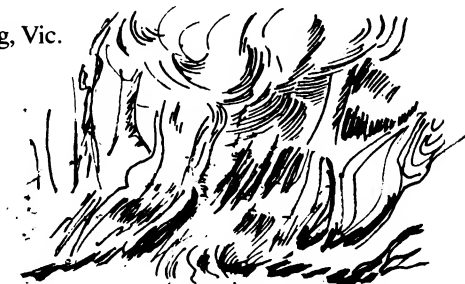
## LARGER ANIMALS

### Forward Planning

Your options will obviously depend on the size and type of property where the animals are kept, but the following options have been suggested by some Community Fireguard group members.

Identify the safest paddock on your property or neighbouring property such as one with a large dam with clear access, surroundings closely grazed with minimal fuel to carry a fire.

- Look at your fencing! If it is electric, what happens if the power goes off or the fence is burnt?



- Consider fencing the 'safe' paddock with steel or concrete posts so it is fireproof.
- Consider having gates in internal property boundaries so stock can be easily moved to other areas without having to be taken down a road.
- If you are at work during the day, consider moving stock into the safer area the night before a Total Fire Ban day.
- If possible, thoroughly water the 'safe' area the night before a Total Fire Ban day.

### If a Fire Threatens

The Victorian Horse Council through Dr Graham Tudge, Past President of the Equine Veterinarians Association, suggests the following strategy.

- Hose your animals all over and do not scrape off.
- Remove all equipment into an open space with the least vegetation. Do not shut the animals into a stable or small yard. Animals will suffer minimal burns if given the maximum space and can cope well on their own if they can move into the open.

If animals do sustain burns the best form of first aid is sponging with cold water until proper veterinary care is available.

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# GARDEN BOUNTY

## Catmint



by Cheryl Beasley, Karalee, Qld.



Catmint grows well in partial shade and is a very hardy perennial. It only grows to around 90 centimetres tall and makes a delightful groundcover in a light soil. Catmint encourages healthy and faster growth in the hair.

### CATMINT SHAMPOO

- 1 egg yolk
- 1/4 cup catmint infusion

Beat the egg into the cool catmint infusion and massage into the hair and scalp thoroughly. Leave for five minutes then rinse out with cool water.

### CATMINT RINSE

- 1 cup catmint
- 2 1/2 cups boiling water

Make a strong infusion from the two ingredients and leave overnight. Strain. Rinse the hair with the infusion two or

three times per week after washing.

### DANDRUFF TONIC

- 1 tbsp catmint infusion
- 1 tbsp comfrey infusion
- 5 tbsp water

Combine the infusions with the water and apply to the scalp with a cotton ball soaked in the mixture. Use twice a week.

### CATMINT OIL

- 1/2 cup fresh catmint
- 2 cups sunflower oil
- 1 tbsp pure alcohol

Pour the oil and alcohol over the chopped catmint, shake and place on a sunny windowsill for fourteen days. Strain and repeat with half a cup of fresh catmint. Strain and bottle.

This oil can be used as a deep hair

treatment, or add two tablespoons to the bath water.

### A DIVERSITY OF USES

The different varieties of catmint attract both bees and butterflies to the garden as well as our feline friends. So if you need to encourage insect pollinators to your garden try incorporating a few of these attractive and delicately perfumed plants. *Nepeta x faassenii* in particular is described as having lovely sprays of lavender blue flowers.

Cats are said to eat the young tips of *Nepeta cataria* when unwell and derive pleasure from rolling all over established plants. Traditionally, felt pieces have been cut and sewn into mouse-like shapes and filled with dried catmint leaves to make 'toys' for house cats.



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# ENDURING ROCK

by Ros Runciman, Dungog, NSW.



For twenty-three years my husband and I were dairy farmers in the Goulburn Valley in Victoria, but in 1987 a short holiday to Main Creek near Dungog in the Hunter Valley started a whole new chapter in our lives. It was love at first sight. We were captivated by the beautiful forests in these foothills to the Barrington Tops. To cut a long story short, we were able to find 140 acres of bushland, named it 'Yeranda', and now it is our home.

As a farmer Kevin had had to be a jack of all trades and his ability to build held us in good stead when we decided to owner/build our home. We wanted to tackle something different and did just that. Our octagonal post and beam home was not the easiest of first projects, but with determination and hard work we got it completed. From start to finish took about four years, but that was with time out to work on other jobs along the way. Our aim was to build the house as economically as possible so we recycled whenever we could. In areas where future

leadlight windows are to go we glazed with glass that had been shelving in a local jeweller's shop. No one will notice tiny scratches once the leadlight panels are there!

External walls are mainly of rock. We made contact with the State Rail quarry and purchased andesite which they crush for the ballast on the railway lines. We heard they were about to increase the price so asked if we could pay in advance for what we had estimated we would need. We hand-selected the rocks at the quarry which is the only way to be sure of getting good usable material. Andesite is a very hard, dense igneous flow rock which is not easy to fashion. It is also very heavy, but the finished product with beautiful greys and pinks is worth the effort. The stone masonry became my part of the project and I would like to encourage any reasonably fit woman to consider such a contribution to an owner-builder project.

The areas where external rock walls were to go saw the concrete slab having

300 mm wide and 25 mm deep rebates. The aim was to select rock approximately 250 mm wide, hence giving a cavity between the exterior wall and the interior stud wall. At the start of a particular wall any extra heavy rocks were placed down low to minimise unnecessary lifting. Between a few of the base rocks I slotted in 250 mm lengths of conduit, sawn in half, lengthways, as a precautionary measure against dampness in the cavity. Care had to be given in not making the wall appear 'bottom-heavy' and most important was the need to keep the wall perfectly plumb as it progressed upwards. I achieved this by simply using a 300 mm cut-to-length measure stick. Before a rock was mortared into position a check from stud wall to the outer edge of the rock was made. At reasonably frequent intervals 300 mm brick ties were fixed between the stud wall.

The basic rule of crossing break lines was followed. As a wall grew scaffolding went into place and at this point quite

heavy rocks could be placed on the plank and then easily lifted and mortared into their selected spot. This helped get some rocks of size into the higher parts of the wall. I used a cement mixer for the mortar which was at a rate of 3 sand, 1 cement, 0.5 fire clay and a dash of plasticiser. Possibly the hardest part was finding the perfect rocks for the corners; where walls meet they obviously need to tie in to each other and that wasn't always easy.

A typical day of rock laying would commence with the mortar being mixed. Rocks were nearly always selected the day before and would be set out below their designated position in the wall. After using up all the mortar for selected rocks I found it preferable to then do a cleaning up of the exposed rock surfaces. Using a sponge and cold water any excess mortar was removed. It didn't take long and I am sure is better done then than at the end of the whole project. After the mortar had 'gone off' I pointed up the mortared joints using a very narrow putty knife to give a neat finish. Rocks would then be selected for the next session with care taken not to bump and consequently loosen any of the freshly mortared rocks.

I consciously paid attention to having a safe working area and always wore safety glasses if I was trying to chip an unwanted corner from a rock. Obviously, the cost and availability has to be considered before one can embark on a building with rock walls. If there was plenty of cheap rock available I would suggest that a small project such as a wood shed could be first tackled before committing to a major building. It is heavy, hard work but ever so rewarding. Determination to succeed, careful selection of your rocks (give the odd shapes a miss) and thorough planning will see your dream walls become reality. Of course, a helper is an essential. ('Kev cut another measure stick, I've just dropped another down the cavity!!')

Our first cottage, 'Kalimna', took 12 tonnes of andesite. This gave us forty square metres of wall cover, the open fireplace and a rock-walled barbecue. Our original purchase price was \$9 per tonne (it then went to \$16), but it would vary from quarry to quarry. Adding the cost of cement, sand and fire clay it still equates to a very cheap building material. Personally the rewards are enormous and rock is so enduring. I am confident my walls will be around for a very long time yet!

As in any other project I hammered as many nails as Kevin into the internal timber ceilings and walls, held that end



Our second holiday cottage 'Pindari' under construction; it operates on solar and gas power.

of the tape measure, coated hundreds of lineal metres of timbers with Estapol, but the rock walls were my personal effort. The entire project was one of working together, but it was challenging to have a part of it that was my responsibility.

Upon completion of the house we were at a bit of a loss as to what to do. Our original plan had been to quickly build a house then head off exploring Australia! It took longer to build than we had expected and then we didn't really want to leave! I had started clearing some bushwalking trails to our rainforest gullies, so the decision to build a small (simple) cottage for rental seemed to be the natural progression. I had continued my rock work by building a rock-walled wood shed and was anxious to do more. In the space of six months we built a very beautiful cottage in a secluded part of our property. 'Kalimna' operates on solar power for lighting and all gas appliances. We built to the appropriate Australian standard to cater for guests with mobility limitations and of course, the outside walls and open fireplace are of andesite rock!

Entering the tourism industry has been a whole new experience for us and one we love. Meeting so many different people and sharing our property with them is great. So much so that last year we completed our second cottage,

'Pindari'. It is also in a secluded part of the property and operates on solar and gas. While some people look for resort-type holidays, there are an enormous number of people looking to get away from the rush and bustle of the city. They don't want TV, telephones, spas. Peace, perfect peace with the birds and the animals as the only visitors, is what they seek.

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# COLD WATER, COLD BEER AND A COOL CHANGE

by Trish Berry, Murwillumbah, NSW.

Once again, in a short space of time, I need to change our address for receipt of our welcome copies of *Grass Roots*. After two months spent house/chook/dog sitting for friends in Lillian Rock, during which it seems like we drove thousands of kilometres looking at every available piece of land between Lismore, Byron Bay, and Tweed Heads, we returned to the very first piece of land we saw in the first days after we arrived north! Irony isn't it! But at least we did our homework, made comparisons, and knew what we wanted.

We wrote it all down. Our list of essential and desirable requirements was detailed. High among the essentials were: freehold land; 2 - 5 acres; 2WD access; mains power. We have just exchanged contracts to purchase land on the slopes of Mount Warning: a share in an MO; 320 acres; and some of the most rugged 4WD access imaginable!!

Anyone seeing our future home will not spend long asking what swayed us. Our partially built house sits midway on a north-facing slope, with spurs running on either side down towards a permanent creek with pure water straight from the national park behind us (sheer joy to anyone used to drinking Sydney water!). The area between the house and the creek will eventually turn into vegie gardens and an orchard interspersed with bottlebrush and other flowering natives which will join the wild magnolias and mass of palms and other rainforest vegetation already there. Directly opposite the balcony the land rises and falls in waves up to the sheer cliffs which form the Elephant and Child in their frozen march east. The mist and clouds constantly change, shrouding the peaks and sliding long probing fingers down into every crevice, then dissolving slowly till they vanish and leave the stoic pair exposed again.

Each day brings new excitement: the first tap, the camp shower, and (oh



One of life's important luxuries, a cold beer at the end of a hot sweaty day.

supremo joy) the gas fridge with its awesome power to turn beer icy cold! I've realised that possibly the most important things in life in order of importance are: water, cold water, cold beer, and a cool change. No item of clothing bought has ever made me feel the sense of luxury and blissful succumbing brought on by that first waft of cool breeze following what can sometimes be days of heat and sweat. When one is still dripping wet after showering and vigorously towelling dry, then you know it's hot!

Things grow here at an alarming rate. My first go with the brushcutter (which left me totally exhausted, dripping wet, and with a new measure of respect for my landscaper husband Alan!) looked a little like the lawnmower haircuts favoured by students at art school in what seems like another life. From amidst the massacred tufts sprang new shoots which were four centimetres high a week later! No-dig gardens here we

come! Armed with a roll of weed mat which, along with a generator, pumps, tanks, bush basher, etc, was part of the stash left by the previous owner under the collective label of 'bonus', I will cut the two-metre grass in small sections and cover until I get more cow poo scraped up from a friendly neighbour's field. I can no longer gaze in rapture at a beautiful field of cows without breaking into my glazed mantra: 'Cow Poo, Cow Poo, Cow Poo'.

The truly amazing thing about buying a share on Derrilin is that in 1981 my ex and I nearly bought on this same property! We ended up buying elsewhere and now I feel like this cyclical touch-down is providing a second chance for me. It brings home the knowledge that one is always in the right place at the right time. And right now, this place and time are about enjoying abundance and being able to breathe.

# CLOVE ORANGES

by Heather Kozak, Dellicknora, Vic.

Clove oranges are a sweet old-fashioned accompaniment to the Christmas season. I find it a soothing pastime to put my feet up on the verandah rail with a bowl of oranges and another of cloves, studding the spice into the fragrant fruit. The scent envelops me in a thick cloud and stays with me for days, making me feel like an exotic denizen of the Taj Mahal.

It is traditional to have a large bowl of clove oranges by the front door and to present departing guests with them as aromatic mementoes. I hang oranges and lemons, treated with cloves, from the Christmas tree with bright ribbons and their perfume mingling with the pine resin is music to our noses.

As well as oranges you can use lemons, limes and grapefruits which retain their own distinct fragrances with delightful results.

## HOW TO MAKE

### Ingredients

- ripe orange, preferably thin-skinned,
- whole cloves
- orris root powder
- cinnamon

Take your fruit and start poking the spiky ends of the clove into it, right up to the hilt. Leaving about one millimetre clear between each clove to allow for shrinkage, cover the whole fruit with cloves. Place one teaspoon of orris root powder and one teaspoon of cinnamon in a bag with the fruit then shake and roll the contents of the bag until the orange is well coated. Wrap up your orange in greaseproof or tissue paper and store in a dark, airy cupboard for about two weeks.

The influence of the cloves prevents the fruit from rotting, and it will continue to shrink and dry for many months. These pomanders, or spice balls as they are also known, can last for decades. I refreshed a twenty year old one of my Grandmother's with a little orange oil and it is still going strong. They can be placed in drawers or hung in wardrobes to subtly spice your clothing as well as acting as a moth repellant, hung from the bedhead to

sweeten your dreams, or dangled from doorknobs to waft sweet scent every time the door swishes open and shut.

There are many ways to decorate the clove orange. A large staple or U-shaped piece of wire can be pushed well into the fruit after two weeks drying, enabling a long piece of ribbon or cord to be threaded through and knotted with a pretty bow (see fig 1).

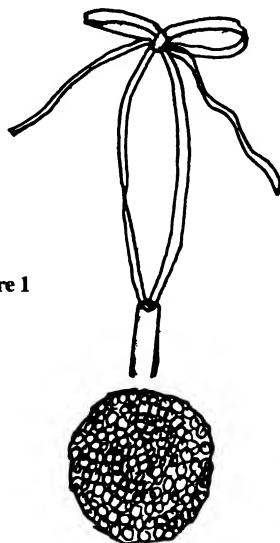


Figure 1

I've experimented with marking the orange into quarters with thin sticky tape, then leaving the taped lines clear when studding the orange with cloves. Remove the tape and rub orris root powder well into the exposed skin, as well as the rest of the cloved fruit. When the two weeks of drying are up, tie up the orange with nice satin ribbons, fitting the ribbons into the grooves left by the taped areas (see fig 2).



Figure 2

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# MUNG BEANS

by Zig Madycki, Jabiru, NT.

Mung bean, *Vigna radiata*, belongs to the *Vigna* species group of beans which originate mainly in tropical or warmer areas, as opposed to *Phaseolus* species which are commonly grown in colder climates. In Australia there are about 12 native *Vigna* species, some of which were utilised as food by Aborigines. *Vigna vexillata*, called *bulkud* locally, produces a tuber which can be eaten raw or cooked but tends to be stringy and is better diced. *Vigna radiata sublobata*, a variety of the commercially grown mung bean, is called *barnkinj* and its immature green seeds were eaten raw. In pidgin they are called bush beans. As a rule I find that *Phaseolus* beans aren't worth attempting to grow in the tropics and just plant *Vigna* beans instead.

Some cultivated *Vigna* species suitable for the tropics are:

Cow pea, *V unguiculata*, young green pods when small, or as dry bean

Snake bean, *V sesquipedalis*, usually as green bean but also as dry bean

Adzuki bean, *V angularis*, usually as a dry bean

Rice bean, *V umbellata*, usually as dry bean, rice sized

Generally, mung beans are commercial varieties which have been bred to mature around the same time and not shatter (split open) so as to enable mechanical harvesting. The seed needs to be handled carefully as rough treatment will make it nonviable. This is one of the possible reasons why, when you're sprouting mung beans, a proportion of the seed sometimes goes off instead of germinating.

Mung beans are used mainly for sprouts, soups, stews, bean meal production, and for making Chinese vermicelli. In the garden they are easily grown and appear to have few problems with pests. At one time, however, the chooks got into my garden when the pods were maturing and devoured the lot. Moments like these one is tempted to classify chooks as pests. While the native varieties here grow where they are subject to frequent inundation during the wet season, the cultivated varieties appear to be less tolerant of waterlogging. Tolerance of soil acidity seems to be equivalent. The soil here has a pH level of 5.3, but I often add wood ash to the garden which would raise it.

A well drained soil would be suitable

and wouldn't require a high nitrogen compost as the plants develop root nodules with rhizobial bacteria. These provide all the nitrogen necessary. Plants are adversely affected by temperatures below 16° C and this should be kept in mind when planning the time of year for planting. Sowing seed before the wet season, provided you have a water supply, gives the plants time to develop and soak up soil nutrients before the rains come to start their leaching process. However, as days become more frequently overcast the plants get leggy, fall over a lot, and mature seeds start to germinate in the pods during extended rainy periods. Planting in the wet season risks soil having been leached of many nutrients and development being retarded. (I've noticed these late plantings produce mature seed within two months and suspect this may

be a photoperiodic response. ) In the dry season you have to watch your minimum temperatures.

From time of planting, flowering usually starts after a month, with pod maturity about another two months later. To prolong the harvesting period care should be taken when picking the pods so that newly emerging flowers aren't damaged. Seed needs to be thoroughly dried for storage otherwise mould growth will become a problem. If heat is used for this it should be below 40° C. Moisture content shouldn't be more than 12 percent.

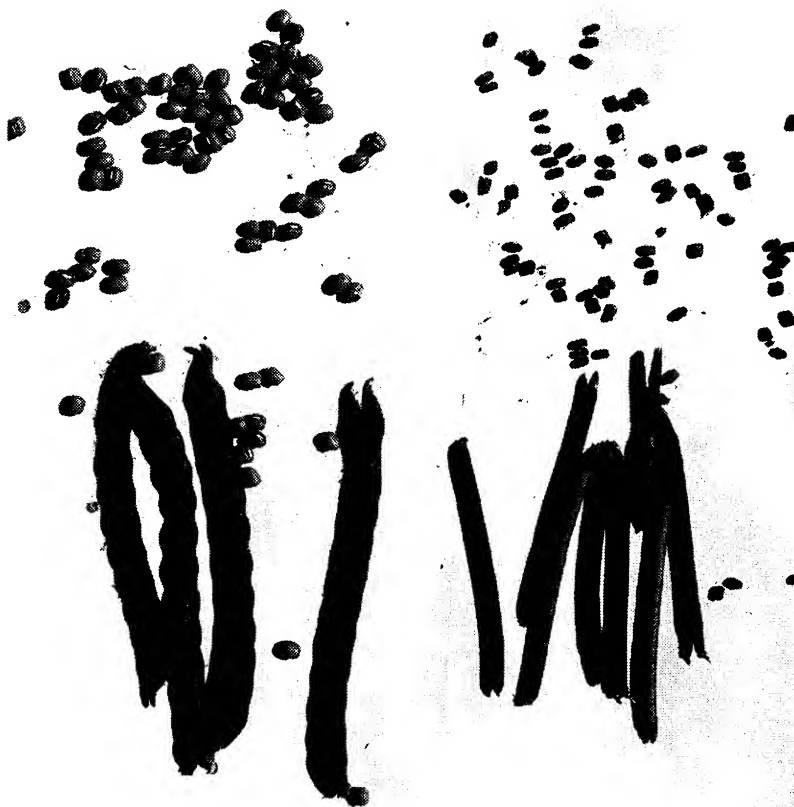
Sprouting beans is an easy process provided proper attention is given to cleanliness, moisture and ventilation. I use four ordinary jars, with gauze over their mouths, in rotation, giving me sprouts every day. First day the seed is soaked for about six hours and then rinsed and drained at least



Native mung bean showing leaf, flower and seed pods.

twice each subsequent day. The jars are kept in a dark, cool place, but on the fourth day the oldest sprouts are left out in the light to green up a little before being eaten. They are high in protein, lysine, tryptophan, calcium, iron, thiamin, riboflavin and vitamin C. On sprouting, starch is converted into simple sugars which are readily digested. Sprouts can be stored in a fridge, for those who have one of those modern contraptions, or else dried for later use.

My gardens have native mung beans growing randomly through them and I usually collect the seed. I've tried sprouting them but find that germination is too erratic, making the exercise impractical. This is a common characteristic of 'wild plants' and is no doubt a defence against early germinators being wiped out by adverse weather conditions. Whether there is any advantage in using the native variety over the commercial one is a matter of personal values and judgement. The native variety has small seed and is a spreading, twining vine.



Pods and seeds of mung beans, commercial variety on the left, native variety at right.

## RECIPES

Bean recipes abound everywhere but I rarely see any for bean sprouts. Here are some I've come across.

### Sprouts With Brown Rice

- 1 cup mung bean sprouts
- ½ cup thinly sliced mushrooms
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1 tbsp chopped spring onions

Heat oil in wok or heavy frying pan and add spring onion and mushrooms. Stir-fry until lightly browned. Add soy sauce, rice and sprouts. Stir-fry for about 3 or 4 minutes. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes.

### Bean Sprout Soup

- 6 cups chicken stock
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups mung bean sprouts
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- salt/pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley

Heat chicken stock in a saucepan then add sprouts and simmer for 3 minutes. Beat eggs and soy sauce together then, removing the stock from the heat, stir them in together. Cook without boiling for 3 minutes. Season to taste and serve garnished with parsley.

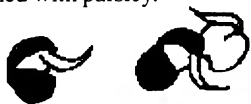
### Yoghurt and Sprout Dip

- 1 cup chopped mung bean sprouts
- 1 tbsp finely chopped spring onions
- 1 cup natural yoghurt
- salt/pepper to taste.

Combine all ingredients thoroughly and chill before serving.

### Sprouts in Egg Dishes

Mung bean sprouts make a tasty addition to a simple omelette, as well as vegetable fritatta and even crustless quiche. Flavour is increased if you dice up an onion, chop fresh herbs and saute in oil until transparent. Add in the sprouts, cook 1-2 minutes. Mix with rest of ingredients.



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# WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT YOUR LOCALE?

## ELBOW VALLEY

by Letty Bosschieter, Elbow Valley, Qld.

We moved the the Warwick region in 1995 from Brisbane. We had retired from our jobs at Australia Post and had enough of city life. Warwick is the largest town on the southern Darling Downs and is situated at the junction of major highways from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

Having all the facilities that a large town boasts, yet still having that unique country air to it, we were totally won over when we purchased our 200 odd acres in Elbow Valley, about 30 kilometres south-east of Warwick. (Named after an elbow of the Condamine river which is the start of the longest river system in Australia).

What do we do in our retirement? We rid our property of lantana, which has taken over thousands of acres of land throughout Queensland. The best method we have found is to cut the cane first, then, when it is a manageable size, uproot the trunk and feed the lot into a fire. We have reclaimed many acres using this method. We have also planted an olive grove as the climate here is suit-

able to grow them commercially.

A gradual climb up the hill behind our house gives us panoramic views of the Great Dividing Range. Yes, we love our home in the bush and will end our days here.

## DARRAWEIT GUIM

by Keith Upward, Darraweit Guim, Vic.

Darraweit Guim is a small township just north of Melbourne, it takes its name from the Aboriginal meaning 'the meeting of the waters,' for it's where two creeks meet and then mingle with another creek to finally flow into the Maribyrnong River which meanders through the hills into Port Phillip Bay.

For years Darraweit Guim was just a name on a signpost off the Hume Highway at Beveridge. I first discovered the township while looking for a shortcut in the early 1980s and subsequently I enjoyed many a morning 'smoko' in the only post office & general store, now, unfortunately closed. What first appealed to me was the serenity of the area

with the sparseness of its individual dwellings nestled in the valley and the historical aura surrounding the old bluestone school building and church. Years later my wife and I purchased a half-acre block opposite the bluestone church. Although only 45 minutes from Melbourne, Darraweit seems to enjoy a different climate and it takes a while to adjust to the growing season.

Darraweit Guim has nothing and yet is everything I love. In spring the green sweeping hills remind me of the Sussex Downs where I grew up. There is an abundance of trout in the creeks, although I can't catch them. As summer arrives the green quickly turns to harsh gold which lasts until winter when the early morning and late afternoon mists hang over the creek area, sometimes giving the township the mythical

## WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT YOUR LOCALE?

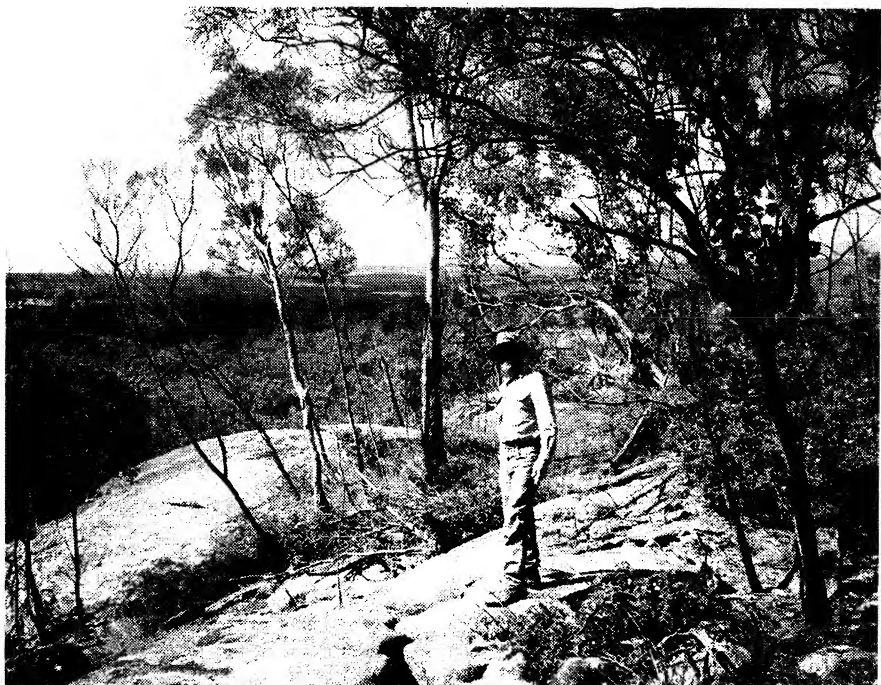
As part of our 25th birthday celebrations we invite readers to let us know what is special about their area or town. What made you choose to live there and what keeps you there?

Write **200 words or less** about your locality. We'll publish the best of these in each issue for the year. If we receive ten letters about Byron Bay, for example, we'll choose one we feel best sums up its attractions in less than 200 words.

The writer of the letter we judge the best for the year – the one that most makes our office full of would-be travellers want to get up and go there – will receive a free GR subscription for themselves and one for their local school, library, or environment group.

It might help your cause if you send a photo that epitomises what you love about your area.

Put pen to paper and sell us on *your* locality.



Arthur Bosschieter at 'Letty's Lookout', one of many granite outcrops on the property.

'Brigadoon' illusion. The surrounding countryside is full of native wildlife including kangaroos, wombats, echidna and platypus in the creeks. In stormy weather, wedge-tailed eagles soar high above, effortlessly navigating the warm air currents. There are no sun-drenched beaches or rainforests, but to me Darraweit Guim is home.

## LORNE

by Gwen Clarke, Euroa, Vic.

It is 40 years since I left the seaside town where I went to school and began adult life. Since then, I have shifted 12 times across three states, travelled extensively and come to rest temporarily or permanently in central Victoria. But I have never completely lost touch with Lorne on the south coast of Victoria, where familiar faces and childhood scenes evoke the memories in this poem each time I return.

### Time's Clock

In dreams, I'm where the sheoak glides  
Between the hills, where echo hides,  
And bluegums march down vaulted isles  
That seem to stretch for miles and miles.  
By shadowed pools, Narcissus-wise,  
Shy wildflowers lean and dragonflies  
make rippling rings,  
While in some far-off ferny gorge, a  
whip bird sings.

I drift with ghosts whose spirits glide  
Round Mt Defiance's grim side,  
Of men who toiled in sun and rain  
This wild resisting coast to tame.  
Who split the sheer, dark face of rock  
In hurtling showers and crashing shock.  
Where once a winding foottrack ran,  
Now sweeps the road that they began.


With memory's eye, I still can see  
The thin brown child that once was me,  
Climbing up the zigzag track  
And at the lookout, glancing back  
To watch the long, slow rollers curl  
Then break in spray and foaming whirl,  
On rocks that snarl along the reef,  
And strain the surf through jagged teeth.

By Phantom Falls, the world's tired  
schemes  
Fade from me, as soft translucent gleams  
Make bridal veils of misty spray,  
Wreath-like I drift, once more a part  
of scene like these that hold my heart.  
But time's clock cannot bring back  
hours,  
As well tell fate by plucking flowers.



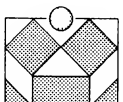
Keith Upward's home at Darraweit Guim, north of Melbourne.

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# Livestock Health and Management

## Information You Need but Haven't Known Where to Ask

If you have queries on any type of livestock send them in and we'll get our panel of experts to research the problem for you. Send them to Livestock Advice Page, Grass Roots, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### A FAMILY PIG?

The children would love a pig but we are beginners with livestock and do not want to rush into purchasing one if there is a chance it will become dangerous and create problems. A friend mentioned miniature pigs – do you know anything about them?

**Anna Strong,  
WANDONG 3758.**

*While pigs make wonderful pets it is best to approach them as farm animals and so set up facilities with this in mind. A simple three sided house faced away from prevailing winds and under the shade of established trees is desirable plus a cemented yard large enough for the pig to be enclosed when it is not convenient to have it running around. Few problems should arise if you manage the animal properly. Pigs do grow to tremendous weights so it is not surprising there is interest in miniatures. There are several breeders producing such pigs now and hopefully the temperament problems and larger than desired size have been bred out of them.*

*They should mature at from 20-50 kg and stand about 32-45 cm high. Castrated males have been more plentiful than females, and were being sold at prices up to \$450. Check the classifieds of the 'Weekly Times' for breeders and look at as many as possible before committing yourself.*

### BROODY HENS

We've had some success with hatching chickens using broody hens, but some of them leave the nest for long periods and others refuse to budge and are reluctant

to take time off to drink and eat and go to the toilet. What should we do? Should we gently shoo hens back to the nest after a ten minute absence or can the eggs be left longer? What about those that do not want to get up from the nest, and even do manure in it? Should we try and make the hen take a break?

**Ian & Cheryl Smith,  
BEGA 2550.**

*It is commonplace for hens to leave nests for 20 or even 30 minutes without apparent detrimental effects on the eggs. Twenty minutes is fine, but after that you should start looking for the hen and guiding her to the nest. Once the embryos have started developing it is surprising how they hold the heat. A handy tip is to lightly cover the eggs with some hay to keep heat in if you are concerned about a lengthy absence.*

*Hens showing reluctance to leave their eggs are a trial as they become very thin and irritable and smelly if voiding in, or at the side of, the nest. They are also prone to collapse at the end of the settings, especially if cold wet weather strikes. Turkeys are usually more prone to this sort of behaviour than fowls. Consider gently lifting the hen off the nest every third day. Ensure no eggs are stuck to her breast or caught up under the wings. Once the check is complete, drop the hen, allowing her to stand on her feet. This sudden action is renown for activating the bowels so stand back. Sometimes the hen will head straight back to the eggs but usually she will take the opportunity to drink and even grab some feed. Setting hens like to have a quick dustbath, so if your hens are enclosed in a pen, ensure there is a box with*

*dry dirt in it for them to use. They also appear to enjoy paddling in puddles – their feet are probably feeling very hot. A bucket of water, thrown down to create mud may entice the hen to cool her feet off. The only other management task that is important at this time is mite and lice control. You should have dusted the hen thoroughly at the beginning of brooding – you do not want chicks facing a heavy infestation of external parasites as soon as they hatch. Ask at the local produce store for a safe insecticide.*

### HOMEMADE COW SLING

I'm hoping some cattle keepers can help me. A few months back I lost a cow after calving because she couldn't get back onto her feet. A commercial cow sling I borrowed was next to useless so I thought I would appeal to GR's ingenuity for help. Has anyone used a homemade sling with success?

The other problem I was faced with was stopping the cow rolling onto her side. Any helpful suggestions? I'd love to see an article on this topic.

**Brenda Bee,  
GLADSTONE 4680.**

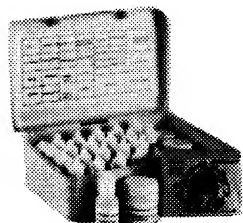
*Could experienced readers help out with an article?*

.....

### POULTRY PEST CONTROL

A good way of controlling pests in fruit trees is to have chickens and ducks run under them. Indian Runners and Khaki Campbells are especially good gobblers of slugs, snails and other insects.

## ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES FOR ANIMALS



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## OCEANS IN CRISIS

A recent survey of Australia's southern seas shows that the rate of fish catch off the NSW southern coast has fallen by as much as 95 percent over the last 20 years. This could be related to the sudden decline in numbers of the fairy penguin population on Montague Island.

In Canada the death of large numbers of sea otters is being linked with a toxic chemical found in a boat paint, the use of which was banned 10 years ago.

More encouraging news is that in Fremantle, WA, cultivated sea lettuce is being used to reduce biological waste effluent on abalone farms. The sea lettuce absorbs nutrient waste, cleansing the waste water from the farms before it enters coastal waters. The method is expected to be used in other marine agriculture ventures.

## GENETIC ENGINEERING

According to *Acres Australia* (September '98), tests carried out on commercially available baby food... 'clearly identified two brands, Wyeth Infasoy Progress and Heinz High Protein Cereal, which contain the transgenic material, even though they were not labelled as containing it - which is the key issue for the GeneEthics Network and other groups and individuals concerned about current developments in our food industry.

'The Wyeth and Heinz products both contained material from Monsanto's Roundup Ready soybean variety, which can be sprayed with high levels of glyphosate herbicide to control weeds.'

The belief is that parents using these products for their babies have a right to know what they contain and make choices accordingly.

In other news, the French government has decided to implement a partial moratorium on the introduction of genetically modified crops for a period of two years. No approvals will be given for the commercial production of any modified crop with the potential to transfer genes to related species.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY FUNDING

The Federal Government has announced funding of \$40 million for two programmes to support the commercial development of renewable energy technologies.

Developers of these technologies will be able to apply for grants of up to \$1 million to assist in the commercial development of their ideas.

Meanwhile, BP Solar plans to spend \$57 million on building a solar panel factory in Sydney.

## ENDANGERED FLORA & FAUNA

In the face of continuing concerns about species extinctions around the world, and especially in light of a recent international survey finding that at least one in eight species of flora worldwide is under threat of extinction, it is encouraging to have some good news. In WA, a community group in conjunction with staff of the Kings Park and Botanic Gardens have, after five years full-time work, saved from extinction the Corrigan grevillea (*Grevillea scapigera*). The grevillea is now being reintroduced into two local reserves and the methods used in saving it can now be used to help save other species.

On the fauna front, the brush-tailed bettong or woylie, close to extinction in the '70s, is now making a comeback, being celebrated as the first Australian mammal to be taken off the threatened species list. Significant in the woylie's recovery have been

fenced sanctuaries and eradication of fox and feral cat popula-

tions. Woylies breed quickly and adapt easily to a variety of habitats once their introduced predators are controlled. Interestingly, the woylie population that survived in the wild in WA was in an area having a dense understorey of poison pea plants, a species containing naturally occurring 1080 to which the woylie, in common with other native animals in WA, has evolved a tolerance. Woylies eat the poison pea seeds and the foxes that might subsequently eat the woylies succumb to secondary poisoning.

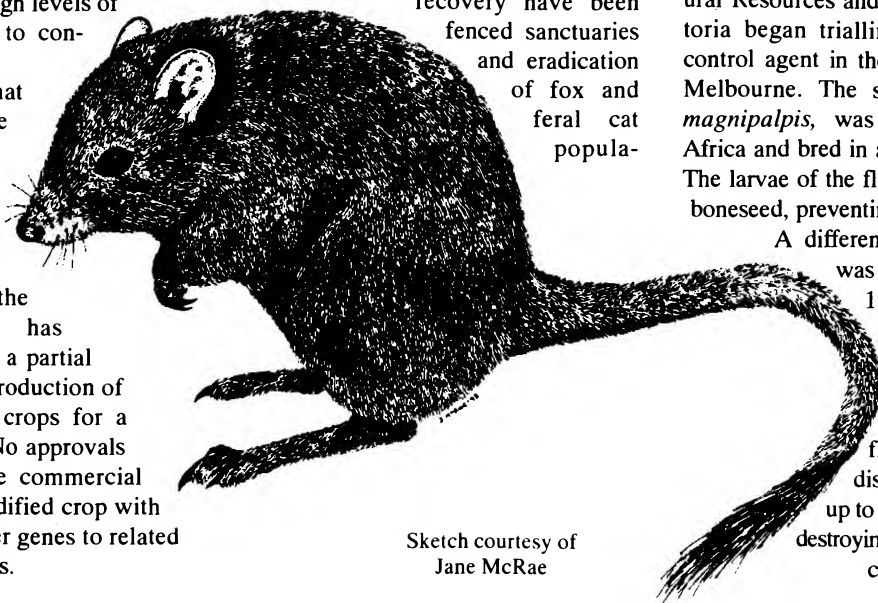
Two more threatened WA mammals, the quenda and the tamar wallaby, have recently been removed from the threatened species list after similar predator eradication programmes.

In northern Victoria meanwhile, efforts of local farmers in fencing and replanting habitat for the superb parrot since 1991 have resulted in the number of breeding pairs remaining stable for the past seven years, an encouraging first step towards the recovery of the species.

## BONESEED CONTROL

Boneseed is one of Victoria's worst environmental weeds, producing numerous hard seeds which build up in the soil and remaining viable for a number of years. Boneseed infestations can spread rapidly through bushland, resulting in the demise of native flora ecosystems and consequently the fauna that depends on them. In June this year the Department Of Natural Resources and Environment in Victoria began trialling a new biological control agent in the You Yangs, west of Melbourne. The seed fly, *Mesoclanis magnipalpis*, was collected in South Africa and bred in a Victorian laboratory. The larvae of the fly eats the fruits of the boneseed, preventing seed from forming.

A different species of seed fly was released in NSW in 1996 to help control bitou bush, a close relative of boneseed. Results to date are encouraging, with the fly showing a rapid dispersal rate, infesting up to 80 percent of buds and destroying an estimated 40 percent of seeds.



Sketch courtesy of Jane McRae

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear GR & Readers,**

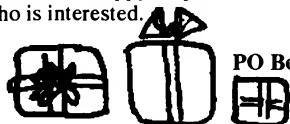
I have been reading GR for a few years and always look forward to the next issue. I live on seven acres and have olive trees in the front paddock. I want to plant firewood trees out the back. At the moment I am working on a chook yard in the side paddock. What I am looking for is a recipe for **FIG CHUTNEY**. If anyone could send it to me I would appreciate it.

**Margaret Coulson,  
RMB 3012, DUNOLLY 3472.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

We were interested to read the letter in GR127 by John & Evelyn. We didn't realise that folk were **BURYING CARAVANS AND OLD BUSES**. We know of incidents of burying water tanks for the storage of food here in Tasmania, and, like on the mainland, there is a general feeling of apprehension about catastrophic events which could be just around the corner.

If anyone is interested, there are several good books relating to problems that many are facing and will have to face in the near future. We would be happy to pass on book titles and information to anyone who is interested.



**Pam Gray,  
PO Box 212, SHEFFIELD 7306.**

**Dear Editors,**

Thanks for your great magazine, which we have been reading since our move to our five acre property thirteen years ago. I am prompted to write my first letter to you because of comments made in the article 'The Joys of Seaweed', GR 127. Jodie Kewley acknowledges that her conscience was pricked when she was told it was illegal for her to remove seaweed from the beach, however she would confine her '**SEAWEED GATHERING** forays to the early hours of the morning' and if 'unlucky enough to incur a fine (she) will suggest to the ranger that (she) pay in robust vegetables.' Aren't laws to be obeyed and aren't these particular laws for the protection of our environment? The vegetables we eat do not normally grow in seaweed covered soil, so please Jodie use an alternative. It is for the ongoing benefit of us all.

**Heather Sparrow,  
PO Box 321, MOUNT COMPASS 5210.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

I first had GR posted to me from Tassie when I was in the UK. Now back in Oz since 1997 I've caught up with it again. I am interested in hearing from any family units intending to travel around Oz in '99/2000. I have wife, daughter 14, & two sons 10 and 6. I am tired of the material possession roundabout, and don't see that passing on this philosophy to my offspring is going to benefit them or Australia.

I am intending to sell up and **GO ON THE ROAD**, maybe for several years, either home or correspondence schooling my kids. If you are considering doing the same, or would like to do so, then maybe there's a possibility of discussion. If you are also interested in being self-sufficient money wise, and utilising internet/PCs, then again we have something in common. I'd also consider block buying/subdivision/community living after the trip. Anyone interested (seriously) in opting out of the material ownership rat race, please contact me. At either mobile: 0418-178-945/Email: ozlink@ozemail.com.au.

**Terence Rodriguez  
PO Box 269, HAMILTON 3300.**



**Dear GR,**

My name is Khali (43) and I live under the trees in a little hut. I opted for a GR way of life 1½ years ago, the same time as my twin sons flew the coop! I'd like to connect with GR folk who have gone from the city to a GR way of life, or who just dream of it.

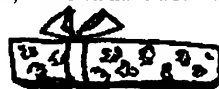
**Khali Harrington,  
'Freedom', North Arm Rd, BOWRAVILLE 2449.**

**Dear Megg and Mary,**

Over Christmas last year several grandchildren stayed at our home. Two of them were interested in picking dahlias for Grandma. At the same time I was taking excess laterals from dahlias and tomatoes. This is to encourage growth of larger flowers and tomatoes.

The girls wanted to know the reason for **PRUNING LATERALS**. This ended with me showing them how to pot up the pruned laterals. Each lateral had to be set into a 15 centimetre pot filled with good garden soil. Care had to be taken that the stem only, not leaves, was planted into the soil. The end result of our Christmas pottings is that two children and grandparents have some late dahlia blooms. Also, in May, we were picking late tomatoes, Grosse Lisse. These are from the potted laterals which we had planted out, staked, and covered with clear plastic for frost protection. We find laterals taken from Grosse Lisse tomatoes usually grow around 60 centimetres in height. Also, we often have a few tomatoes up to mid-June.

**Ken Woods,  
269 Heard Ave, YARRAMBAT 3091.**



**Dear Grass Roots,**

In response to the request by Marni H of Rowes Bay. **BAKING POWDER** is usually made up of bicarbonate of soda and tartaric acid, which work when moistened, plus a slower acting acid such as sodium pyrophosphate which works when heated in the oven. None of these contain aluminium as a part of the substance.

**Barbara O'Neill,  
Cnr Mt Pedlar Rd, THE FOREST 2580.**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Our young family and I are planning on moving down to NSW, somewhere **BETWEEN TWEED HEADS AND PORT STEPHENS**. I am attempting to find alternative-type schools, and/or communities which are sensitive to our lifestyle: wholistic-minded, vegetarian and the children are not immunised. I hope some of the readers of your wonderfully inspiring magazine can help. All replies appreciated.

**Joanna Zerafa,  
7 Fraser St, INGHAM 4850.**

**Dear Readers,**

I am one for **NATURAL NONDRUG TREATMENTS**. I have come across a product that has helped so many people with PMS, menopause, chronic fatigue, stress, hormone troubles, osteoporosis and more. I have a friend who has Crohns disease and since being on this product he is much better; he used to go through hell with pain.

I did have chronic fatigue (all I wanted to do was sleep), menopause and quite a few other troubles, but since being on this natural product I now feel great. If anyone would like to know more about this product please write.

**Judy McIntyre,  
PO Box 100, EAGLE HEIGHTS 4271.**



**Dear Megg,**

My mother, a Yorkshire woman and an ex-president of the Women's Institute in East Yorkshire had (which I have now) a most fascinating book entitled **YORKSHIRE W I RECIPE BOOK**. As well as cooking recipes it contains tips on such things as the removal of stains, marks on furniture, floor polishes, salves, cough cures etc. They all work. There is one recipe readers might like to try. It is eaten on Christmas Eve and is called Frumenty: 8 oz (240 g) wheat, 3 pts (1.8 lt) water, ¼ tsp salt. Wash the wheat and soak in water for one hour. Put into a stew pot with the fresh water and salt and cook gently in a moderate oven until soft. Pour off the water and serve wheat with hot milk and sugar with optional cream and a little grated nutmeg. I can assure you that it's very rich and filling.

**Ronnie Bentham-Green,  
The Gatehouse, PO Box 194, NAGAMBIE 3608.**

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

Re putting **DOG MANURE IN THE COMPOST HEAP**. If dogs are fed the biscuits mentioned in *Natural Pet Care*, their manure degrades incredibly quickly (24 hours often) and does not need to be collected. If the dogs are fed as suggested in that book they will not harbour harmful parasites and manure properly composted in a well managed system is free of all pathogens by the time it is used. Properly made compost (biodynamic particularly) can digest many undesirables, including chemicals. Dog manure should not be a problem.

Re a letter from A S Mann, Toowoomba, Qld. Shingles is a horrid painful complaint partly caused by nervous worry and partly by a B vitamin deficiency. Adelle Davis' excellent book, *Let's Get Well*, tells how to cure it using vitamin B6, B complex and vitamin C, and I was ever grateful for her information when my younger cancer-struck son had shingles all over his body. At the time we were going to a French allopathic/homoeopathic doctor, who confirmed the treatment. This worked in 24 hours. The worst rashes could be seen receding below the skin and they gave a little irritation for another two days before all was well.



Pat Coleby,  
91 Church Street, MALDON 3463

Dear Megg and Mary,

What a great magazine. Thanks. It's a nice read and it's great to read about so many personal trials, tribulations and triumphs. I recently subscribed to your magazine as a thank you gesture for my brother-in-law and my sister and I'm pleased to report that they are thoroughly enjoying their first copy. I'd like to hear from people who are **HOME SCHOOLING HIGH SCHOOL AGED** students and I am especially interested to hear about students who have a learning disability. I am increasingly doubtful that the education system in high school has anything to offer my son.



Brenda Beauchamp  
PO Box 330, GLADSTONE 4680.

Dear GR Folk,

Sometimes, there are no letters in Feedback that I can give an answer to and at other times there are quite a lot. This is one of the latter issues, so I hope some of these answers help.

To David Keen: There is no nice way to **GET RID OF PARROTS** (mine are mostly rosellas and musk lorikeets) from your fruit trees. I usually leave several trees for them to vandalise and cover the ones I want to harvest with bird netting, which I pull in close around the base, so they can't sneak up from underneath. I'm also thinking of planting more trees, so we can share with the birds and all be happy.

To Don Horsey: One cheap and simple way of **HEATING WATER BY THE SUN** is simply by coiling a long, black, plastic or rubber hose up. Cold water in one end, hot water will come out the other and into a receptacle. It can be coiled on the ground, but is probably better, and more out of the way, on a sloping roof. I don't know how long the pipe would last and it needs to be flexible enough that it doesn't crack, as some are inclined to do, but it should work. (Be careful with the end product, as it can be close to boiling!)

To Peter O'Brien: I remember seeing a design for **DISTILLING FRESH WATER** using the solar method. It was basically a tent of black plastic. The yucky water (muddy, salty, whatever) was put in an open container (dish) in the middle, the good water evaporated off, ran down the sloping sides into receptacles on each side. Another simple, but effective, solution. I haven't actually tried this, but I can't see why it wouldn't work. You could make it fairly large, or make several smaller ones. Make a door on one end, so you can replenish the evaporating water and clean out the dish now and then.

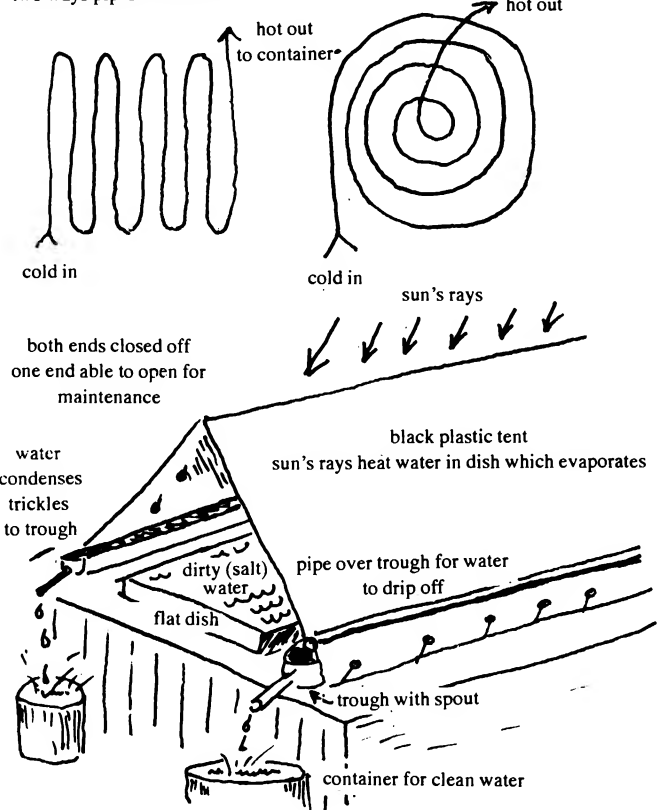
To A M Hughes (and anyone else with a crook back): I was introduced to fish oil capsules to help my **ARTHRITIC BACK**. Magic! Because I also have high blood pressure, I can't take the green-lipped

mussel tablets or caps, as they have too much salt in them, but fish oil caps work very well, along with a (prescription) slow-release anti-inflammatory capsule once a day (Oruvail). I'm also careful not to over-do anything and work for 50 minutes, rest for 10 minutes, preferably with feet up. Won't hurt to try. I hope it works for you.

To finish off, I must just say how great it is to see so many people, particularly young folk, willing to 'have a go' and try self-sufficiency and the GR lifestyle. Good on you! I wish I was starting out to do this all over again and was thirty-years younger! Hold to the dream!

Jenny Lacey,  
55 Gorry Rd, RED LION via TALBOT 3371.

two ways pipes can be coiled



Dear John Rule c/o GR,

I saw your enquiry about **DWARF FRUIT TREES** in GR 128. You can get dwarf fruit trees in Brisbane from a place near Queensland University: Edible Landscapes, 37 Bangalla St, Torwood 4066. Ph: 07-3870-3872. They get their stock from up the coast at: Honnef Fruit & Nut Tree Nursery, Callagan Rd, Narangba 4504. Ph: 07-3888-1223.



Dr Barbara Ford  
PO Box 515, WYNNUM 4178

Dear Editors,

I get a lot of enjoyment out of reading Feedback but would love to know the answers to many of the queries. I have a query of my own. I would like to grow some **CALABASH TREES** (*Crescentia cujete*), but have no idea whether the climate where I live is suitable, where to obtain them, or how long it takes for them to bear fruit. We are inland from the coast and slightly higher. We very seldom get frosts. We are successfully growing many warm climate trees. If anyone can give me information about these trees, I would be very grateful. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for a magazine which is always interesting and helpful.

Vivienne Barrett,  
91 Coomera Valley Dr, GUANABA 4210.



# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GR Readers,

We are trying very hard to move ourselves and three young sons out of Canberra to the far south coast of NSW. Out of the blue it seems a job has come through in the right place, which is a very good omen we feel. So we are trying to make the selling and the buying add up for a move at the end of this year. With the bank's delicate requirements stacking up, we now think we will need to be quite creative to pull it off. What would work for us is a relatively small acreage with a house we remove initially from somewhere else. If GR readers are aware of a **REMOVABLE WEATHERBOARD** house sitting on land somewhere within five hours of the ACT that might be suitable as a temporary dwelling (that, installed properly, the bank may like), we would be very grateful if you could let us know. For low dollars of course and no mobile homes.



Maree Livermore,  
8 Blyth Place, CURTIN 2605.

## Dear Grass Roots,

Congratulations on reaching 25 years. What a milestone! I have loved reading it for at least 18 years and although we are lazy suburban grassrooters we have tried a few experiments over the years. Today we still have a few chooks and are interested in a healthy lifestyle. I love reading Feedback in particular. I've been using apple cider vinegar in honey every day for mild arthritis – it works for me! Can anyone tell me what else apple cider vinegar can be used for?

I loved Roberino's letter (issue 128) to Feedback, I've reread it many times as I too have recently faced cancer (fortunately I'm clear now) and I've had to rethink a few things. My heart goes out to Tom Elgar, who I agree with, just because you have a healthy lifestyle doesn't mean you won't get cancer. Through my experience I've learnt that family and friends are the most valuable part of my life. One idea I'd like to share with you is to start a **HAPPY MEMORIES BOOK** to write one positive entry every day, to list or illustrate something you saw, a place you visited, something someone said to you or a success you had. Keep up the great work Megg and co.

Robyn Wheatley,  
30 Austin Rd, SEAFORD 3198.

## Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a **HEATER UNIT USING A DRIP SYSTEM** to burn sump oil and was wondering if readers can help.

Milton Good,  
Fax: 07-4155-3328.

## Dear Grass Roots,

We want to tell readers about **UVEITIS**, an eye disease in horses. Symptoms are running liquid from eyes, infected eyes, and horses are prone to 'squin' in sunlight. Horses can progressively go blind. One vet prescribed cortisone treatment, with no improvement over a period of three months! The second vet did a full examination of our horse, prescribed two lots of eye drops, and powdered aspirin in the feed twice a day (noticeable improvement). It took a couple of months to clear the eyes. One eye was worse than the other. Just thought I'd pass this on, as horse owning is expensive and it may help someone. We had a bill of \$400 (plus cortisone costs \$100) with first vet plus three months of horse in pain. When our horse gets the eye problem back again, I crush two aspirin between two dessertspoons and put it in his feed. After a couple of days to a week, he is fine again and the bouts seem to be getting less and less now.

On another subject, also to do with horses, anyone got a cure for Queensland itch (besides sulphur)? Someone says it's a lice, others say it's a skin disorder or sandfly bite/urine? We brought our Thoroughbred horse over from NZ two years ago and he is adjusting OK. The top of his tail and wither area has a small patch where he rubs because it is itchy. Not so bad now in the cooler weather. Tried iodine, Selsun wash (vet's advice), solution from an aromatherapist – teatree, lavender soothing cream mix, but with summer coming on I'd like to know exactly what I have to deal with, to enable me to solve it. Anyone had a swab test done on their horse? Hello to all. Anyone want to write in the Toowoomba area? From all of us in our little corner of the world.

Amazulu & Alexandria,  
PO Box 2590, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

## Dear Megg,

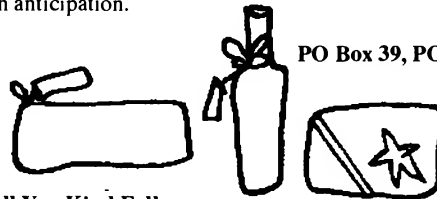
In reply to Peter O'Brien, Brooklyn NSW, in Feedback issue 128. Tanami Solar Power in the Northern Territory produce and supply a **SOLAR POWERED REVERSE OSMOSIS UNIT** (solar water desalinator). They can be contacted by phone/fax on 08-8962-2698. Or write to: Tanami Solar Power, PO Box 945, Tennant Creek, NT 0861.

Neil Connors,  
PO Box 945, TENNANT CREEK 0861.

## Dear GRs,

I am wondering if anybody has a copy of **KEEPING SILK-WORMS** by Monnie Fenner, that they would like to sell. It is now out of print. Or could somebody suggest another more easily available book on the care of silkworms? I have eggs which will hatch in spring and I need some more information on their care. Thanks, waiting in anticipation.

G Hudson,  
PO Box 39, PORTLAND 3305.



## To All You Kind Folk,

I've been reading GR for many years and thoroughly enjoy each one. Quite often I read various articles on feeding dogs and cats on purely vegetarian diets. I have been breeding and showing Staffordshire Bull Terriers for some time now and to look at the enjoyment on their faces whilst gnawing at a bone, I cannot see how anyone could deprive their beloved friend of such a natural pleasure if nothing else. One only need look at the teeth, jaws and digestive system of these animals to know that it is wrong to feed in a total vegetarian way. Better to try for a natural diet for dogs! A very good book on this subject I found is *Give Your Dog A Bone*, by Dr Ian Billinghurst, PO Box 703, Lithgow, NSW 2790. I think the cost was under \$20, and a small price for the savings in food costs and vet bills. It is a very practical and common sense way to feed dogs. Cats benefit too. For more info please feel free to write to either address sending an SAE.

On another matter could anyone please help us with a list of **RUDOLPH STEINER SCHOOLS** along the east coast of Australia. We are intent on travelling for approximately one year, leaving our bit of paradise with plans to sell up after we have found if there is something better on offer out there. Is there Steiner correspondence and equivalent available to high school students and pre-schoolers?

Peter, Meegan, Skye & Jay,  
PO Box 148, RAVENSHOE 4872.

## Dear GR,

In the Nov/Dec issue of GR 1997, I wrote a small article on my lifestyle and my love of the country. As I am fast approaching 60 years of age, and single, I never in my wildest dreams ever thought I would meet a girl I could **SHARE MY DREAMS** with. I had almost given up all hope. All of a sudden, letters just poured in from all over Australia, even one from Africa, from GR readers, and I finally met the girl I had been waiting for. We are so close, we share everything, we go everywhere together. She loves all the simple things in life that I love. She is not afraid to get into a muddy chook pen to get the eggs, or get cattle in the yard and shut the gate. She loves flowers, sunsets on the dam, the smell of the bush when wet and rain upon the roof. We are getting married soon and we have never been happier. Snug and warm in our little cottage in the ranges, sharing our love with wallabies, magpies and kookaburras. Thank you *Grass Roots* for bringing us together.

Possum Jack,  
BLACKBUTT.

Thank you Jack for sharing your story with us. Good luck to you both from all at GR.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Readers,**

I am seeking information on **INTERSTATE MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION**. I will greatly appreciate if you can provide me with any useful practical info as to the relative ease or difficulty when registering an older vehicle (mine currently NSW) in SA, WA and NT only. Mainly technical/mechanical stringency/requirements re safety inspection. Thanks and let me know if I can pay back some way.

**Peter Fair,**  
PO Box 4086, BAY VILLAGE 2261.

**Dear GR readers,**

Hello everyone! I have been a GR reader for about 20 years! Hubby and I are now middle-aged 'empty nesters.' We are about to take a leap of faith and head for an acreage on the mid-north coast, **TAREE/PORT MACQUARIE AREA**. I would love to hear from any GR folk in these parts. All letters will be answered. Thanking you all in anticipation.

**Carol Meers,**  
129 Hume Highway, MITTAGONG 2575.



**Dear GR,**

I'm interested in contacting **AUSTRALIAN ODINISTS** with a view to establishing a sustainable community/permaculture work group. The intention being to eventually facilitate a community and support network for remote individuals interested in the traditional, spiritual path of the northern peoples. All enquiries most welcome.

**Martin,**  
PO Box 42, COOLAMON 2701.

**Dear Megg and crew,**

It's time for me to share with others who, for reasons of their own, find themselves living alone and heading down the hill. I found myself in this situation. My family are all wonderful adults now, who have families of their own and aren't I pleased as I've got wonderful grandkids. I am 59 years and I felt I needed to fill my life with **NEW FACES AND PLACES**. I knew out there was full of just that. So, with my little dome tent and my 'bubble' car, I set off. I just headed south using all the facilities along the way, such as, mobile servos, showers, food, tourist information stops, roadside fruit stalls, flea markets, car boot sales. I experienced such lovely places, talked to some lovely people, and saw things I'd never seen before. If you, like me, are on a limited income, own your own home and car, then with care and a sense of adventure you too can do it.

All that began nine months ago and I've taken myself off three times since I first began. I encourage you all to just take that first step. 1. Put your hat in your car. 2. Your tent! Just listen to your desire to do it and step 3 will come. Ignore the 'I can'ts' and the 'what-ifs', they will always be there to bug you. If it's your dream, follow it. You have to eat wherever you are. It does cost a bit for fuel and accommodation, but aren't you worth it?

I'd like to hear from those of you who travel and we can share ideas. Also can someone tell me is there such a club as a 'travel club' or a club for later years travellers?

**Danielle Wassell,**  
87 Wyndham Ave, BOYNE ISLAND 4680.



**Dear GR Readers,**

Help! Does anyone out there have any information on **WOOD-GAS POWERED VEHICLES**? I'm also interested in methane gas as a household energy source. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

**Dianne Alphonso,**  
17 Thomas St, JUNEE 2663.

**Dear Grass Roots,**

On a holiday recently in Australia I was delighted to find your magazine which I thoroughly enjoyed reading. As we are planning to come and live in Australia I would very much like to communicate by email with any readers who live within a one hundred mile radius of **COFFS HARBOUR** in NSW, which is where we will be located.

I am interested particularly in growing fruit, vegetables and nuts, keeping poultry, permaculture, practical DIY, gardening in rainforest areas and general self-sufficiency.

We are both teachers of English and Philosophy respectively, and I worked for some time as a subeditor of a weekly newspaper. I enjoy reading, my dogs, embroidery and we are vegetarians and do not have any children. My email address is: greetham@mail.telpac.pt.

**Pat Rowe,**  
PORTUGAL.

**Dear GR Readers,**

In regard to Jenny Scott's letter on **RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS**. The medical journal, *The Lancet*, 12th October 1991, has an interesting article titled 'Controlled trial of fasting and one year vegetarian diet in rheumatoid arthritis.'

In regard to osteo-arthritis, the herb gotu kola, according to the CRC book of medicinal herbs, does have anti-inflammatory effects, however it's carcinogenic. Another interesting book I found at the university library shows the bioflavonoids found in various fruits and vegetables, as well as foods with omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids which also have anti-inflammatory effects. I'm no longer taking fourteen aspirin a day and have managed this by taking cod-liver oil, sunflower seed, almond and linseed. I also drink red grape juice, oranges and grapefruits.

**John Danecki,**  
COOCHIEMUDLO ISLAND.



**Dear Megg and Mary,**

I have enjoyed your magazine for some time now and have endeavoured to put some of the contents into practice. I live some 100 kilometres north-east of Dubbo and am conscious of the environment and endeavour to omit all poisonous substances from the property. Over the years these have been used and many small native animals have been lost from the area.

I am hoping that you or your readers can assist me in my inquiry. We have a **COLLECTION OF AMPHIBIANS** and, believing that they are essential to our environment, we do not like to use shelf cleaners in the bathroom etc as we are on a septic system. We would like to know what to use for the betterment of both the environment and the amphibians.

My other inquiry is: What type of plants are most suitable for the amphibians in both the bathroom and laundry?

**Genevieve Young,**  
Carawatha, MERRYGOEN 2831.

**Dear Grass Roots Readers,**

Since discovering GR recently we've scanned the Grassifieds and Feedback pages of each issue looking for our niche. We are in our 20s with three young children to love. Gary is qualified in two trades and is away from home too much. I stay home and nurture, teach, grow food, sew, cook, and love it. We read about and practise GR stuff when we can and enjoy every minute of it.

We are very interested in **RURAL LAND SHARING**, intentional communities etc. Our ideal home would be on the Atherton Tablelands, Qld, but we are open to other suggestions. We'd like to hear from anyone with ideas or info to help us find our home soon. Perhaps others who are waiting and searching would like to write.

**Gary & Belinda,**  
PO Box 1008, INGHAM 4850.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear GR and Friends,**

After years of unexplained symptoms I have decided I need to change my diet and bring it back to one that is as 'unprocessed' as possible. Reading your article, 'Is Wheat Friendly' (GR 128), has given me the incentive to take responsibility for my health and body.

Living in today's 'fast pace', 'processed' society, where we are moving more and more away from simplicity and from our connection to Mother Earth (all GR's excluded that is!), has become extremely taxing on the body and for me it is time to change.

I am requesting recipes (vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, sugar free etc), ideas and experience from anyone who has made this change in their diet, to assist me in implementing what I now consider to be an essential building block for good health. I would love to put together my own personal recipe book that I can use and perhaps share with friends who I believe are suffering unnecessarily with similar ailments. Hope to hear from you soon, Thanks!

**M Cork,**

**64 Somerset St, WINDSOR 4030.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

I'm an active man in my early thirties who is dealing with a **MAJOR DISEASE** for which mainstream medicine can offer nothing. I am working towards being very pro-active, in a relaxed sort of a way. As a part of this I am keen to hear from anyone who is in a similar situation and has a similar outlook. The sharing of difficulties and positive experiences would be terrific.

**Willing Writer,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3611.**



**Dear GR Readers,**

I am wanting to purchase a **DUAL STYLE** (Eastern/Western) **TOILET PEDESTAL**, in other words a toilet that allows both squatting or sitting. Any information gratefully received.

**Marie Hayes,**

**16 Foord Ave, HURLSTONE PARK 2193.**

**Dear GR Staff and Readers,**

To all the people who grow/produce organic foods that end up at **ORGANIC RETAILERS** on the outskirts of Brisbane, a great thank you. Although highly priced, it is now a high priority on my full recovery list. Some small and positive results are already evident. What a great move in restoring our very delicate earth and its inhabitants.

I would like to know if anyone has had successful/fruitful results from organically growing **MINIATURE FRUIT TREES**/vines/shrubs in pots! If so, were these bought at a local nursery or from another source? Also, is there anyone in the Brisbane area who has achieved this?

I'm looking for honest penfriends who have a sincere desire to share through letter writing. I will be turning 47 years at the end of the year. I am a mother of a young adolescent son, have a quiet personality, love nature, times with 'special' family and friends, with a sense of adventure and freedom within. Please note that I will not be replying to any letters pushing any healing methods or religious/spiritual literature, nor will these be read. I have found my own effective personal way for both.

Last but not least, an immense thank you to GR and all its staff for ongoing support and sincere help. Thanks Mary for your very thoughtful and kind reply to my last letter. May those who need your help and support find their way to your magazine and its readers. It's a great way to share and learn.

**Michele Blanche,**

**PO Box 216, NUNDAH 4012.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

There are no other magazines or newspapers that provide such a volume of information for the hobby farmer as GR. Despite studying GR, I spend more time trying to create local native vegetation than practising 'self-sufficiency' because I believe in the end it is more

important than proving that I can do without all the things that modern science, medicine and industry offer. I get fertiliser and lime spread on my paddocks and use commercial drenches and vaccinations because I want my animals to eat healthy grass and not carry parasites.

Grazing animals are genetically geared to roam around finding the best feed available. When confined to a paddock they are at the mercy of farmers who may not provide them with optimum nutrition. One has to accept the fact that most Australian soils are deplorably deficient in phosphorus and other elements necessary to animals which are not genetically built for Australian conditions. Fifty years ago sheep and cattle suffered enormously because we didn't know enough about the soils – the lack of boron, zinc, calcium magnesium, copper, phosphorus, etc in particular areas of the country. Compost produced on site does not overcome that problem.

On to some specific issues raised in GR 127 and 128. **LEG CRAMPS** and **A WHITE FLUFFY TONGUE** are symptoms of poor nutrition. Every vitamin, mineral and element should be increased. A fluffy tongue also indicates that the wrong bacteria dominate the bowel. Take large doses of yoghurt or kefir with lots of milk, prunes to ensure regular movement and regular doses of lightly cooked lamb's fry to improve the nutrition. **CARPAL TUNNEL** is usually associated with over-use or tense muscles. Some say vitamin B6 in large doses relieves it, but take care, that vitamin can damage your nerve endings.

GR often carries a letter begging us country folk to provide free accommodation to 'would-be' country folk who can't afford to buy property. Most of us are struggling to get set-up or stay afloat, so we're not keen on giving away our spare bedrooms. Like me, others would probably consider taking a compatible boarder, or a couple, who are either willing to pay or have some useful skills – like stock-handling, horticulture, native seed collection, carpentry, cooking or whatever. The tax department is not interested, I believe, in casual income from such an arrangement so it's worth considering if you can provide your host with references to assure them that you are bona fide.

**Helen Garretty,**

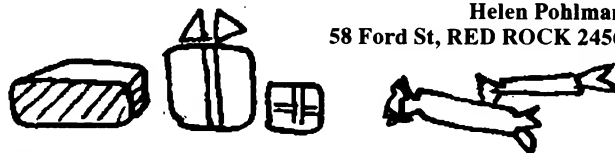
**RMB 2359, YALLOURN NORTH 3825.**

**Dear Megg and Mary,**

To your request for info on the **THERMA-JIG**. I bought mine a few years ago from: C Stern, PO Box 309, Malanda, Qld 4885. Phone number at the time of purchase: 070-953-815. Hope this helps – great mag – thanks for years and years of joyous, relaxing hours curled up with GR.

**Helen Pohlman,**

**58 Ford St, RED ROCK 2456.**



**Dear GR & Readers,**

I've just gone through my last five copies of GR and extracted lots of tips and advice on **TRAVELLING IN AUSTRALIA**, but am still hungry for more info! My husband and I plan to leave in April/May '99 with our two sons (currently aged 9 and 7). We are still tossing up the pros and cons of various vehicles and would appreciate readers' views. We will be camping as much as possible and working where feasible and schooling our boys. Any tips, ideas and experiences would be happily received.

**Siobhan South**

**49 Rosebery St, BAYSWATER 6053.**

Anonymous letters will not be published. Please indicate if you would like personal details to be withheld.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear GRs,**

Can anyone help me with information on how to keep 100% **FRUIT ICE CREAM** soft and preserved? All information will be appreciated.

**Yolanda Brach,**  
3/205 Torquay Tce, TORQUAY 4655.

**Dear Folk,**

I'm wondering if any of you have info to share about **BANANA SPRAYING**. Does anyone know the chemical constituents of the sprays and their effects on the health of those who live near plantations, or eat the treated fruit itself? Does the spray break down into harmless or more harmful components? What are their effects? Any facts or thoughts would be appreciated.

**Leigh,**

PO Box 283, BOWRAVILLE 2449.



**Dear Megg and Mary,**

I have been an avid reader of GR and a fan of all it stands for, for the past twenty years, and I'd like to take this opportunity of congratulating you and your helpers on your tremendous efforts. Keep up the wonderful work!

I brought my two children up alone, on a pension, and found great comfort from the stories in the Feedback section. It's been like being part of one big happy family, and friendships made through GR pages have enriched my life. Yesterday while visiting my naturopath in Bundaberg, I purchased a copy of GR 127, the first I've read this year, due to ill health, and all the old feelings have returned. Thank you again for a truly wonderful magazine, and may it only go from strength to strength. Good luck with your move.

**Estelle M Ethell,**  
PO Box 22, MT PENNY 4671.

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Regarding **MAKING A SPINNING WHEEL** and processes as required in GR 128. For anyone close to Perth, check out the Alexander Library, with both very old and new books on level two that cover construction and use of wheels, looms, natural dye and harvesting, tanning, garment manufacture, glass blowing, blacksmithing, tool construction, paper making, turbine construction (water and steam powered), hot air engines in all forms etc. There is also a very comprehensive list of clubs and associations (a lot of which are not in the yellow pages). But the greatest wealth of old-world knowledge there is in the periodicals, with most held going as far back as the 50s and 40s, with many others going even further back and some no longer printed today. The secret is that most of the magazines are bound and put in storage. Only a small number of bound volumes are on the shelves. So you will need to use the index card and microfiche to find the library reference numbers to obtain them from the archives.

For those who can make it to a local library that hasn't got the information you desire, they may have a microfiche service or computer database of state books and fill out an inter-library loan with some luck.

Last, I have a plea for help. A recent accident (end June) has left me with a leg that refuses to mend and stuck on the dole. I am putting my stuff into cheap storage in Sydney (green inventors tend to have a lot of stuff) and plan to move to Perth with no money to pay a removalist. So I was wondering if anyone had a removalist truck, or bus, that could be paid in petrol for a cross-country adventure, or

cross-country adventurers that may be able to help out with taking parts of my life across for a bit of cash. Any other great alternatives warmly appreciated. I have a one ton drill press which I will swap for help or cash and have a lot of craft and technical books that I will give away/swap for help too.

**David Matthews,**  
20 William Henry St, ULTIMO 2007.

**Dear Grass Roots Readers,**

Does anybody have any information on **STEINER SCHOOLS** and/or how many there are in NSW and their locations? Any information would be appreciated.

**Jenny, Andrew & Tara,**  
26 Jean St, WELLINGTON 2820.

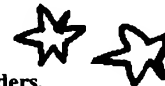
**Dear GR,**

I am a young, skinny, 53 year old woman who is finding it difficult to humble myself to **ASK FOR HELP** from anyone out there who is going through the same thing.

I am an optimist at heart with a positive attitude, but the last couple of years have been tough trying to keep my head above water after passing through the cycle of rock bottom. I seem to have come through this physically intact, but have lost the confidence to do things I want to do. For about a year now I have been entertaining the idea of selling all my second-hand goods and chattels and setting off to find myself somewhere in Australia.

I live on the dole in a rented cottage near the sea with my much loved dog Beno. I grow organic vegies in the backyard, have a reasonable car to get around in and I love acrylic painting and sketching. I have a few friends and a belief in a higher power that stands me in good stead. I would like to travel and visit organic farms and meet the people who have that wonderful courage and belief in organic growing. I am a hard worker which my backyard is testimony to.

I love my garden but it seems I may have to leave as the house is being sold and the rent is going up until it does. So now I would like to make reality my trip through Australia somewhere. Please write me if I can visit with you and pitch my tent for a while here and there. I feel if I have somewhere to go I will do it and get over my fears. I know there is a niche for me somewhere. I am a qualified hairdresser and have four diplomas in massage and natural health, so I can always do a barter system on my travels. If you identify with me please write me.

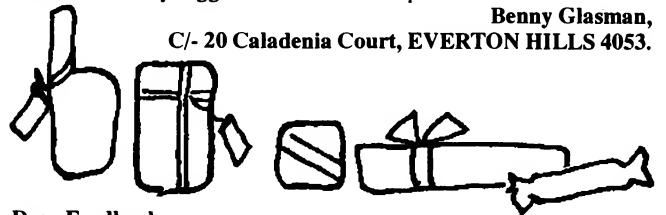


**Lenie Morcus,**  
19 Ingleston St, WYNNUM 4178.

**Dear GR Readers,**

I wish to grow my fruit, nuts, vegies and herbs without the taking of any life. Thus, to deter the insects and bugs, not kill them. Any useful books, information or contacts related to such growing would be very appreciated, or any tips at all! Also I've been looking, unsuccessfully so far, for a **MANUALLY OPERATED COFFEE BEAN GRINDER**. Any suggestions would be helpful.

**Benny Glasman,**  
C/- 20 Caladenia Court, EVERTON HILLS 4053.



**Dear Feedback,**

My partner Milan and I have just moved to the New England region, Guyra, and are considering building an alternative house, such as straw bale, and using alternative energy sources. We are interested to hear from anyone who has **BUILT COMFORTABLY IN A VERY COLD LOCATION**. We'd love some encouragement and hints.

**Alison and Milan,**  
'Abbey Green', Tubbamurra Rd, GUYRA 2365.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.



# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Readers,

Re: **TREATED PINE PRODUCTS:** I'm replying to a letter from Deb of Port Lincoln. Originally I was going to write direct to her but feel all your readers should be made aware of the following. Recently I was invited to dinner at a friend's 130 acre property in the country. His dwelling was a beautiful log cabin style with treated pine logs outside and some also used on feature walls within. When I commented how lovely his property was my friend agreed, but sadly added: 'Everything is perfect except for the house.' He then related how since moving in eighteen months ago he and his wife had suffered constantly from 'terrible headaches and nose bleeds'. He hadn't realised it may be the arsenic in the treated logs until he complained of his symptoms to a neighbour who then advised that the previous owner also had suffered from the same complaints. He has now sold the property.

Readers should realise that these products are poisonous and their suitability should be checked with health authorities before using.

Roy E Ryan,  
PO Box 315, MEREWETHER 2291.



Dear GR Readers,

This is my first letter to your mag although I've answered a few. I've just established a fruit and citrus orchard and would like to make **TRADITIONAL MARMALADE USING SEVILLE ORANGE** or poor man's orange. Could anyone owning these citrus be so kind as to send me some seed.

Larry Brett,  
PO Box 461, KAPUNDA 5373.

Dear GR Readers,

Thanks for such an interesting read. We are searching for a bush block up to 20 acres in **CABOOLTURE - WOODFORD** area and are finding it hard to get detailed weather statistics. Can anyone help?

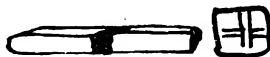
We have been Queenslanders for four months, doing the big move from Sydney. City stress and noise have been traded for mountain views, sunsets, privacy and a slower pace. My husband Mark is a carpet layer, who was fortunate to find work up here within two weeks. I stay at home with our 1 1/2 year old daughter Cassandra and my plants to keep me busy.

I am very keen to start a wholesale nursery, concentrating on permaculture and indigenous plants. I enjoy music, bushwalking, reading and cooking, as well as being a plant addict.

If anyone from around this area would like to drop us a line we would love to hear from you as we don't know many people here yet and need some local knowledge. I would also like to join a permaculture group if there are any nearby.

Lastly, any ideas of how to cheaply disguise a large scratch on lacquered floorboards? Also, any natural repellents or traps for small fruit flies that are driving me crazy! We look forward to hearing from you.

Penny Hayer,  
964 D'Aguilar Hwy, WAMURAN 4512.



Dear Grass Roots Folks,

Such an informative magazine of timeless value! I'm a gypsy soul, 30s and happily married. Our family is of the four-legged kind and we've been doing our share of roving the east coast. Each individual has a different need and ours was 'rugged beauty by the sea'. My hubby is a gentle fisherman, so being by the sea is important for our food and health. So, for now we've put out our anchor. I think this area has a lot of potential if maintained in its natural beauty, with gum trees everywhere, being what I love. I enjoy hearing from anyone who enjoys simple, happy living with gentle folk.

D Calby,  
GPO YEPOON 4703.

Dear Grass Rootsters,

Very few of us would argue against us all **REDUCING OUR CONSUMPTION**. Most of us would do so in order to either tread more lightly on this planet, or to live in greater synchronicity with less affluent people on this earth.

The people I wish to contact are those committed to a more simplistic lifestyle because it is part of their 'spiritual path.' They are doing it for themselves and also for these above reasons.

If living without mechanical aids, living without killing, and living by assisting and sharing with other people, appeals to you, please contact me.

I wish to live in Tasmania in a community committed to this lifestyle. One that is not religion based and one that accepts all.

I am a very physical practical person with many life skills. Communication is so crude and imprecise so even if you are only vaguely interested in what I am on about please put pen to paper.

A Moynena,  
PO Box 176, DEVONPORT 7310.



Dear Megg, Crew & Readers,

After having only read three issues, I feel a part of the 'family' of readers and others associated with this great magazine. It is with great joy that I write to you and with a little sadness too. Since my last letter, which you kindly published in GR 126, I am happy to report that I received countless letters and phone calls of support, along with a tape from 'Slim' Wilson in Qld. It is to Slim and Roberino I wish to extend particular thanks, for their thoughts, encouragement and many ideas. It very much restores faith in human nature to hear from these people, who, with no encouragement or gain, offer a great deal of help. Unfortunately, there is often a down side, as is the case now. Along with the many letters of encouragement, alas, we also received several 'get rich quick' and 'bad things will happen to you' chain-type letters. To these cowardly anonymous correspondents I say: 'get a life people!'

One of the most interesting of phone calls I received was from a lady, Hope, who said she too had bought a property not too far from us, and came from a similar mining background. To cut a long story short, it turns out we knew each other from more than 10 years ago. We eventually met up and all got on like a house on fire, exchanging ideas, Jackie French books and much more. If not for GR, this may not have happened. Many thanks!

On a different note, I'd like to say that we have achieved heaps since arriving on our twenty-five acre paradise. So far we've installed a 'new' second-hand Rayburn stove; replaced the dilapidated hot water system; installed a solid fuel heater; re-established three tracks (by hand); rid ourselves of countless rats, cockroaches, fleas and silverfish; moved the pump and all the pipes and built a shed, to name a few. All this has happened while holding down two jobs, rearing three kids, and in only eight months. Not too bad I think.

In issue number 127, Skye asked for any tips on getting rid of cockroaches. Well we have had great success from a little electronic gadget called 'plug-in pest free', which is available via mail order from a company called Innovations, based in Sydney. We've put our neighbours onto it too, and everyone agrees that their rodent numbers have diminished dramatically and there is no sign of roaches either. It produces an electronic pulsing, which goes through your 240 volt wiring system and is environmentally safe. We were not keen on using rat poisons, as our first use resulted in a few dunnarts dying too. So far this little gadget has worked a treat and at around \$80 with a warranty for three years, it's not bad value either. I wouldn't normally promote anyone's products, but I feel this to be a great invention and would like to see less use of poisons everywhere.



Roger Bettoni,  
Ph: 08-9776-2060, fax: 08-9776-2018,  
email: roger@karriweb.com.au

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear GR,**

To Ruth from Mt Roskill NZ. I also asked for **SOCK PATTERNS**. I kept all the letters with the patterns sent and I'm sorry your name wasn't in them. I can't remember anything arriving from NZ. I'm sorry if you kindly sent me something and I didn't reply. I did get a pattern from a Mrs Nightingale from England, but the postcard I sent thanking her came back address unknown. So if you are reading this, thank you very much. Ray now has twelve pairs of socks. My sister and I have come to the conclusion that Mum made up her own pattern, but a couple did come close. Please don't send us any more chain letters, our puppy can only chew up so many. I've even received them from Ghana, some asking for money.

In GR 126 Hugo Standish wrote about **COMFREY**. I don't know about leaves being any good, but my dad swore by the ointment. During WW2 he was involved in a very serious accident in a plane landing. He was kept in hospital as his leg had been crushed. During the ten months he was there the doctors did a new type of operation on him (bone grafting). He walked out of that hospital on crutches, then spent a year at Blackpool, swimming in the bay twice daily, after which he had a hot bath and was rubbed with comfrey ointment, then had hot bandages wrapped around his legs. He swore it helped him. When I was 14 I had my wrist broken in a hockey match and again after the plaster came off, on went the ointment. I don't suffer with any pain at all in my left wrist. Three years ago my eldest son broke three of his bones in his hand and we did it to him, but he does have plates in his hand as it wasn't a clean break. Dad's operation is in a book called *Medical History of WW2*. It was written by the doctor who performed the operation.

With my neighbour's friend having the brain tumour, she was told to go home and enjoy what time she had left. Her children were 4 and 6 at the time. She was told to try the tea by a naturopath. It's working for her as her children are teenagers now. There was an article in the *Adelaide Sunday Mail* about a gentleman who had cancer and went to Mexico for treatment, he also took his family who suffered from asthma and they all came back cured. I know he did write a book on how he did it. If you are interested, it appeared in February and the address of the advertiser is: King William St, Adelaide 5000. I'm sure they can put you on to him.

**Robyne Neal,**  
22 Cynnet Ct, ENCOUNTER BAY 5211.

**Dear GR People,**

Greetings once more from the land of sand. When visiting Victoria I was shown a newspaper cutting of an article written by a health mogul, advocating eating a **JOJOBA BEAN** daily to improve health. I can't imagine where this person got this totally erroneous idea, as jojoba beans are toxic. True, they do suppress appetite, but contain other nasties as well. I read this in scientific papers on jojoba and was told personally by the late Dr Lennox Davidson, who was a world authority on jojoba. Jojoba meal can be detoxified for use as stockfood, but the cost to do so exceeds the end value of the product.

Peter Dalla, where are you mate? Please get in touch. Would anyone reading this and knowing Peter please pass this on. I need assistance in planning **SIMPLE ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS**, can someone help please.



**Wally Davies,**  
CMB PARACHILNA 5730.

**Dear Readers,**

This is the first time I've put pen to paper to ask GR for help. Our humble abode has been invaded! We need assistance on what **TYPE OF FENCE**, wall or structure to erect in order to once again restore peace, privacy and hopefully permanent sanity.

Almost nineteen years ago, we moved from the big smoke to our rural haven, one and a third acres, to raise and educate our children in the country, live a healthier lifestyle and ride horses. My husband gained employment on a sheep and cattle property, I stayed at home, milked a house cow, reared calves, tended vegies, made my own but-

ter and baked endlessly, especially recipes which required lots of milk. We swapped butter for eggs etc and fortunately were given farm-killed meat to compensate for a meagre wage. Basically, we were self-sufficient.

Our home was part of a dairy farm, a good bit of dirt, on a few titles, divided as such and sold. We purchased the original farmhouse. Nothing flash, a weatherboard, ply ceilings and masonite walls, the dunny outside – in true country style. Of course we intended to do it up. Unfortunately, our marriage broke down. I stayed on with the children, my husband returned to the city. I went to uni and now have a normal job, departing in the dark and returning in the dark (in winter). My lifestyle is completely different, but still had the comfort of a quiet rural aspect, that is until new neighbours invaded the tranquility we have loved for so long.

Their acreage consists of land as far as the eye can see, which runs alongside and behind my little acre and a bit. They have erected a large shed very near, but no doubt within legal limits of, our back wire fence. First thing in the morning, as a wake-up call, and usually just as I arrive home, my neighbours rev up their noisy four-wheeler motor bike and ride up and down near my fence to feed their stock, or just go for a ride at any time. This is most intrusive to the once-peaceful area. I have spoken to my neighbours and also rang the local council to no avail.

Apart from the usual city paling fence, I'd be interested to hear of alternative barriers. Naturally, I've planted several natives shrubs which we anxiously await the growth of. Please help.

Congratulations on twenty-five years of publishing. I look forward to many more publications.

**Liz Bernal,**  
PO Box 312, LEONGATHA 3953.

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

I am having my first baby in December and am trying to locate unbleached terry towelling or unbleached cotton nappies, or any other unbleached materials or nappies suitable for a newborn infant. I would also like to know of any nonsoap alternative for washing my new baby with, as well as any other helpful information on environment and baby friendly ideas.

**Mandy McGrath,**  
C/- 7 Riverview St, POTATO POINT 2545.  
*Good luck Mandy. Let us know how you get on.*

**Dear GR Readers,**

Several **ANTI-CRAMP REMEDIES** have appeared in recent issues, and I would like to make my contribution to relieving this terrible cramp pain so many suffer from. It is to do with pressure points.

There are many times at social gatherings such as concerts, meetings, and so on, that we are inhibited from standing up to try and relieve a cramp in the legs. Here is the perfect answer. By pressing together thumb and first finger (forming an 'O') and pressing as hard as you can (with both hands), within one minute the cramp will stop. The big plus is that we can do this without drawing attention to our plight. Each person I have told this to has had astonished success; even in bed with severe cramps in both legs it works.

If anyone out there knows of other 'pressure point' relief for pain such as headache, I am sure that GR readers would be eternally grateful for sharing this knowledge with a letter to Feedback.

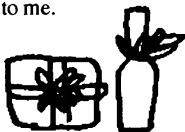
**Ada,**  
LEONGATHA 3953.

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Thanks for your magazine. Many of our states in Australia are boasting the advantages of living in them, but I'd like your readers to know that living in **TASMANIA IS A FANTASTIC LIFESTYLE**. Because of a number of varying reasons, people are leaving our state, and this is producing an oversupply of cheap homes, great acreages and cheap land.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

I have at my disposal a number of home and land owners who live on what we call 'the sunshine coast' of Tasmania. This area of Sorell, Dodges Ferry and Primrose Sands is just 20-40 minutes from Hobart and central to many of the great tourist areas of Tasmania. The area itself boasts fantastic long white swimming and surfing beaches with ample water sport facilities. If you would like a list of those properties please send a large SAE to me.



W Wrangell,  
PO Box 59, SORELL 7173.

Dear GRs,

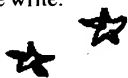
Would Maureen Ezra, who was travelling around Australia in a Mazda T3000 motorhome and who wrote to Ian JJ, GR127, from Swansea Tas on 10-6-1998, please write to Ian again C/- Grass Roots mag, as he wants to return the photos you sent.

Ian Nethercote  
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you so much for a great magazine, it has been very inspiring and has helped greatly to focus my goals in life!

I'm writing in hope that someone has intimate knowledge of **CELTIC SYMBOLISM** and would be willing to design an armband tattoo for me. I have found many books on the subject, but no real detailed explanations on individual motifs. Also, most motifs you can find with detailed explanations don't have info on how to incorporate them in a bigger design without changing their meaning. So as you can see I need someone who can work with my chosen themes and bring them all together in perfect harmony to create a beautiful intricate armband design. I am willing to pay for the design, so if you can help me please write.



Kiersten Willams,  
6 Sturgess Pl, WESTON 2611,  
Ph: 02-6287-3831.

Dear Feedback,

I feel I must reply to Maria Kanas when she says it is obvious I have never seen a feral cat. I live in the country and we have feral cats, wild dogs, foxes and every other predator you can name. I've also heard of men shooting kangaroos on a driveby for fun. So I do know all about ferals, including man.

Joan Marshall,  
GRESFORD 2311.

Dear GR Folk,

Thank you to all who answered my last letter. Many apologies if I missed answering you. I have a very tidy partner and sometimes things get filed away. I would like to let our readers in the Bundaberg area know of the happenings going on at the moment.

A **SELF-HELP HEALTH GROUP** has been formed and we meet every Wednesday evening at 6pm at the Crofton St hall for a shared vegetarian meal. Vegans, vegetarians and those interested in becoming so are especially welcome as together we can share knowledge and support each other to make the necessary changes in our diet.

With food choices we can get to sort out scientific fact from marketing hype. I have two particularly good videos that I would like to share. Anyone who does not want to come to our group but would like to see these videos can get in touch with me. After our meal, we go on to a healing circle and magnetobiology support group. Some people may only want to come for the meal and that's OK. Healing with magnets (magnetobiology) is fascinating and anyone who would like information can ring Sally, 4159-4793, or myself.

Also, for almost a year now a group of permaculture/organic growing people have been meeting monthly in districts around Bundaberg. For details you can ring Tony, 4126-2532, or myself.

I would also like to warn people of the dangers of using canola oil. I have been using it for years now, thinking it next best to olive oil.

That turns out to be marketing hype not scientific fact. Check your soy milk, folks. The following is from Aug/Oct '98 *Health and Healing*: Canola oil comes from rape seed, which is part of the mustard family of plants. Rape is the most toxic of all food oil plants. It is a weed. Insects will not eat it. It is deadly poisonous. Rape seed is a penetrating oil, to be used in light industry, not for human consumption.

Lynette Dennis,  
8 Invicta Rd, AVONDALE 4672,  
Ph: 07-4156-1642.

Dear Chrissi Bisset,

Re: Grasshoppers. Try planting lots of **LARKSPUR** seeds everywhere. Let them seed out after summer, you shouldn't need to buy seed again. I have a rose-growing friend in Euroa, who swears this works.



Elizabeth,  
RMB 2205, GLENALDALE 3864.

Dear Editor,

We have moved from Perth to Tasmania. One thing we are having to learn to cope with is frost and another is being 600 metres above sea level. I am sure **FROST AND HIGH ALTITUDE GARDENING** has been raised before in previous issues which we don't have. However, we are sure that things can be grown here as they are in England, Switzerland etc. What we are lacking is information about what crops can be planted other than tubers, brassicas and berries. We are wanting as self-sufficient as possible a food garden as well as a commercial crop. We have 22 acres of rolling cleared pasture with mountain views all round. Do we need windbreaks, walls, shelter, glasshouse? Does anyone have any ideas they could share with us? Also, where can I get seeds for banana passionfruit? They say it is frost resistant.

D & G Pomeroy,  
6 Calverts Rd, TAYENE 7259.

Dear GR,

Thank you for the information and inspiration. I am a 24 year old female planning on buying a house on the Mornington Peninsula (Rye area) later this year. My vision is one of wholesome living and, in time, semi-self-sufficiency. Does anyone have experiences of good organic growing in the **SANDY PENINSULA SOIL**?

Also, I will have a room for rent after I move in. I will be studying Steiner education for the next few years and would love for another creative, motivated, happy person to share the space with me and my dog and cat. We would love you to have a sense of humour, be a non-smoker and share our love of the ocean. Thanks again for *Grass Roots* - my wholesome living bible.



Jacqui Donohue,  
7 Potts St, MENTONE 3194.

Dear Megg,

I am writing to thank you for publishing my article in GR128. I feel so proud to be published. At last, I have made my mark upon this world. There has been so much response, telephone calls and letters, from lonely women all over Australia, even a letter from a lonely fellow. There must be thousands of lonely people out there, all feeling like I do. Perhaps I should think about becoming a mating agency or maybe a lonely hearts club.

Arthur G Pettifer,  
Lillifield, LILLIAN ROCK 2474  
Ph: 02-6689-7394, email: arthur@nor.com.au

Dear GRs,

Does anyone have any knowledge of **RUDOLPH STEINER SCHOOLS IN QLD**? We would prefer a school that is not in a commercial area such as Sunshine Coast or Brisbane, but one near a permaculture or alternative lifestyle area. Please call reverse charge on 07-3271-5757 and talk to Chris or Tod.

Chris & Tod,  
07-3271-5757.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Megg and Mary,

Mudgee Housing Co-operative is a small **URBAN PERMACULTURE VILLAGE**, established in a partnership between community and government. The members have been housed for just over twelve months and have two vacancies: a single bedroom semi-detached unit and a two bedroom house.

The Co-op is looking for people interested in developing community and a sense of belonging within a permaculture setting. Prospective applicants would need to be avid gardeners and have an openness to learning the skills involved in nurturing with others our intentional community.

The group is keen to include all members in the ongoing management of the project through consensus decision making and creative problem solving. Members are also afforded the opportunity to attend training workshops run by the Association of Resource Co-operative Housing (ARCH), the peak body of not-for-profit co-ops in NSW, as well as in-house workshops. Education of members is seen as vital to the project's growth.

A wide variety of fruit and nut trees, as well as natives, herbs and other ground covers have been planted. The main focus at this stage is in planting more ground covers, weeding and mulching. Wild ducks and other birdlife visit our pond and we are in the process of introducing chook tractors to help with weeding the garden.

Contact Pearl on 02-6372-0043 or Greg, 6372-1132 for an information kit and application form.



Greg Dollin,

1/178 Merton Rd, MUDGEE 2850.

Dear Grass Roots,

In past issues I've seen letters from people who have had **PSORIASIS** so I was hoping someone could help me. My brother had psoriasis and he seems to have it quite badly. As sufferers know, it isn't a good look. Anyway, he lives out of town and he finds that the creams he uses are very expensive and don't help too much. He has joined the Psoriasis Association, but says that they haven't been able to tell him anything that he doesn't already know. So if there are any readers that could help him it would be really appreciated.



Mark,

PO Box 122, CARDWELL 4849.

Dear Megg & Mob,

Well, after 25 years of sitting on my backside and doing nothing more than reading your great magazine, I have finally decided to get my act together. I am asking any readers in South Australia if they can tell me if there is any land and dwelling (large or small acreages) with fresh water, available for sale, rent, vendor financed purchase, beg, borrow, steal in the **WILPENNA POUND AREA** of your state (within around 50-100 kilometres of the Strzelecki mountain range).

We, my nine year old son and myself, are looking to make the move in the new year but are unsure of what is available over there workwise, schooling, craft fairs etc. So if you have a spare moment or two and can drop me a line, send me a newspaper, photograph etc, it would be most appreciated. Also any details of available employment (I am a book-keeper/accountant by trade and of late a real estate sales consultant). I'll try my hand at just about anything.

Any information will be most appreciated and all letters will be replied to. Best regards and thanks for keeping my hopes up for the last 25 years. Hope the next 25 are just as rewarding to you all.

Laurel Dunphy,

C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

Dear Grass Roots Family,

We, like many, have been reading this great mag for 25 years and enjoy every issue. Now we are trying to establish ourselves on our own piece of this great land and need some help. Firstly, could anyone tell us where we can buy an old-fashioned **HAND-OPERATED CEMENT MIXER** (our much-used beauty was pinched). We have tried phoning interstate, but have come up with a blank. Secondly, we

would like to obtain some **PIE MELON SEEDS** as we would love to make some melon and ginger jam. Thirdly, does anyone know of an environmentally friendly way of keeping termites away from our fruit trees? We are afraid to comment on how well a tree is doing in case the termites hear us and decide to feast on it.

Barbara,

PO Box 581, PALMERSTON 0831.

Dear GR,

Thanks for publishing my letter. I got heaps of mail from some great people. Thanks also for the article on **DEXTERS**, the breed needs as much promotion as it can get. We still haven't been able to get finance to buy our place, but we are still hopeful. This year we have a bumper barley crop, if nothing happens to it before harvest time, but there is a lot of **WILD RADISH WEED** around the edges, does anyone know an organic way to get rid of the stuff? We are pulling it out at the moment, which is very time consuming. Does anyone know if **HEMP GROWING** is legal in Queensland? The kind used for fibre that is, and what are the set-up costs? I've rung the Hemp Foundation a number of times but with no reply. We are looking at various crops to put in next year, it has to be something that is relatively profitable though.



Jude Wright,

PO Box 1984, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

Dear GR,

Hi, this is my first letter to GR and I would like to congratulate all the people who put this fantastic magazine together. Feedback is the most exciting and enticing section for me. I love to read of others' experiences, knowledge and questions, to see if I can offer help.

Help is what I'm seeking just now. I am a **SLOW METHODOICAL THINKER** and when it comes to verbal expression I usually lose the critical key words needed to express what I'm trying to say. One second it's there and then it's gone just as quickly, leaving me fumbling for words and feeling frustrated and inadequate. This also happens when writing, so I've ruled out nerves. I would love to hear from anyone out there who experiences the same, or anyone who can offer an explanation or strategies to deal with this problem.

Robyn Hodder,

PO Box 362, STH GRAFTON 2460.



Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you to the editors, writers and correspondents who put so much of themselves into this magazine - it is greatly appreciated. I love to go into the newsagent to see if the next issue is on the shelf yet. I absolutely devour it from cover to cover, grudgingly share it with hubby Ray. I love Feedback, and often wish I could get some of the advice other people ask for! So, for the first time ever, I am writing to see if anyone can help us. We make our own bread and would like to grow our own grain for this, but have no idea where to start. I have read about a couple in Tasmania who grew their own grains, so our climate should be okay too. We have similar weather to Melbourne, although a couple of degrees hotter in summer, slightly less summer humidity, generally high winter rainfall, some frosts in winter. Our position is a bit windy, but we are working on tree belts for shelter. Our soil is very rich, lots of good stuff and worms. If anyone who has **GROWN THEIR OWN GRAIN** has time to write to us, we would love to hear from you about what you did.

Ray & Debbie Fisher,

Ray & Debbie, please write to us with your address.



# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

I'd be interested in any GR reader who keeps a few bees and could write and tell us the process they go through to GET NICE CLEAN HONEY. We have a hand spinner and this time we heated the honey by putting a bucket of honey in water and heating the water to approximately 45°C, then straining it into larger containers. We seem to go through a lot of time and rigmarole to get the finished product. Also, the best way to EXTRACT THE BEESWAX. Thank you for your great magazine.



**Maureen Aitken,**  
PO Box 11, MUKINBUDIN 6479.

Dear GR Folk,

I have a request I'm sure has been made before and which some of you may be able to help me with. I need to know some facts about the dangers of VACCINATION, and addresses of any organisations or groups which deal with this kind of research. I prefer a natural approach to health and usually manage without too much intervention. In April '99 I'm due to become a mum for the first time and I'm reluctant to go through 'the system' but have little choice at this stage. I don't want to succumb to the pressure of the medical establishment and its doctors to do things to myself and my babe which I don't agree with and which may be harmful. I need to arm myself with accurate information about immunisation and any other potentially dangerous 'routine' procedures which I should avoid. If anyone can share their experiences or knowledge with me I'd be most grateful. Thanks to all for making such a great magazine work!

**Leigh,**  
PO Box 283, BOWRAVILLE 2449.

Dear GR,

Please, please, please would you be able to put the following into edition 130 as it could mean the fruition of our dreams. Peggy of Muchea Western Australia, if you have not recontacted us please do as we are both super excited about your initial suggestion. We have talked long and hard and are very interested in helping you with your plans.

**Pat & Sam Dunne,**  
40 Vidler St, CLOVERDALE, 6105.  
Email: patnsam@space.net.au Ph: 09-9277-4041

Dear GR Crew,

I am seeking information and would be extremely grateful if you could assist me. My teenage daughter who turns sixteen this year is going through hell (puberty/hormones) with her SKIN BREAKING OUT in pimples, welts, lumps, bumps etc. This is causing her major problems; lack of esteem, introversion etc. The doctor has put her on the 'Pill' to try and help things settle down. She eats sensibly, drinks heaps of water and generally looks after herself. It's not a hereditary thing either as neither myself nor her mother suffered in this way. Is there anybody out there who may have some knowledge/experience with natural remedies?

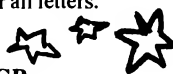
Next year (1999) is her deb year. She is a brilliant, hard working student, has a great personality (of course I'm biased) and it would be wonderful for her to end her secondary schooling being belle of the ball! We all know how important confidence is, particularly for younger people and we all want to see them develop into happy, confident and well balanced people. So, in anticipations, thanks for your help.

**Jim Darling,**  
2 Dawn Ave, DANDENONG 3175.

Dear GR & Readers,

Thank you for a wonderfully informative and inspirational magazine. I started reading GR when a friend gave me a stack of old GRs and now I'm hooked. THE JEWEL OF SELF SUFFICIENCY by Helen Garett in issue 129 particularly hit home. I'm a recently single 23 year old woman. Three years ago I moved out of the city to be with my country man. He left me seven months ago for another woman. Now I find myself alone, lonely and isolated with no transport. I have an orchard, sheep and an old run-down house to look after on an extremely tight budget and limited knowledge. I'm not ready to give up yet. I would welcome any advice from readers. I would also welcome letters from other singles or anyone who wants to write and share their

experiences. It gets depressing when all I get in the mail are bills. I will answer all letters.



**N Turnbull,**  
C/- Post Office, MOLE CREEK 7304.

Dear GR,

As this is my first time reading GR, I wish to correspond with like-minded people or companies who are into RECYCLING, money-saving tips, the environment and general contact in the world of GR.

Also, if anyone can send me a list of companies or second-hand places, that have an overabundance of knitting wool, sewing materials, household goods, whatever the product may be. Please contact me as soon as possible, so I can correspond back as I am champing at the bit to get started down the road of a better life.

**Rosemary Gillies,**  
6 Small St, WAGGA WAGGA 2650.

Hello Readers,

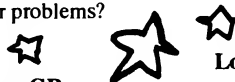
I am a 20 year old who has recently been diagnosed with Type 1 INSULIN DEPENDENT DIABETES. An Indian doctor has recommended that I eat the veins from the leaf of the NEEM TREE. He believes that this, with the help of other remedies, may cure me.

My problem is that I live in Victoria and these leaves only grow in the tropical forests of Queensland. I was wondering if there is any kind soul out there who would be willing to collect these leaves for me and send them to me in Victoria. I would pay for postage and other costs of course. Looking forward to hearing from you.

**Linda Keath,**  
298 Heidelberg/Warrandyte Rd, WARRANDYTE 3113.

Dear GR Readers,

We have recently moved to a five acre block of land near Mackay. We have had major PROBLEMS WITH TICKS since we arrived and our horse has huge swellings from being bitten. We've had a \$300 trip to the vet with our dog and my husband is having a bad reaction from their bites. Our vet suggested it is because we are near cane and it is no longer being burnt, thus allowing the ticks and hosts to flourish. Does anyone have any remedies or advice they could offer to help us with our problems?



**Margaret Palmer,**  
Lot 10 Devereux Crk Rd, MARIAN 4753.

Dear GR,

Since publishing my letter in GR128 I have had a WONDERFUL RESPONSE, with offers of help with my shop. I am pleased to have found a couple to take on the business. Thank you to all those who responded. If anyone is interested in moving to this beautiful part of Far East Gippsland there is plenty of inexpensive land available. House blocks around \$2000, land \$400-\$500 per acre. If you would like to settle in a small community in the mountain forests of East Gippsland, drop me a line. Thank you again for your help.

**Michelle Hartmeier,**  
Hayden's Bog, BENDOC 3888.

Dear GR,

I recently picked up GR and was impressed by the motivation, ideas, snippets of information provided by your articles and readers.

Save our Seas/World Environment Day was directed toward raising community awareness to the plight of marine ecosystems. How ironic it was that The Joys of Seaweed (GR127), appeared on the opposite page, let alone in this magazine.

J. Kewley, rightly highlighted the value of seaweed, it is a wonderful organic material providing food and habitat for flora and fauna. It is invaluable to a healthy garden, that garden being our foreshore areas. Organic beach material does not just happen to be there for your specific need, it has intrinsic value to foreshore environs. It's illegal removal is contributing to the decline in environmental quality found at our foreshore areas. Listen to your conscience. Utilise if you must, the commercially available seaweed fertilizer and contact a conservation organisation for advice on ways to Save our Seas.

**Paul Clifton,**  
PO Box 1192, KUNUNURRA 6743.

# RIISING EVERY TIME

By Michele Dixon, Campbelltown, NSW.

Can it be? Twenty-five years since a youthful 'I' with a headful of dreams met the equally young GR issue number one. The joy I felt that at long last here was something that echoed my dreams and thoughts of a better way to live, a better way to treat the tiny planet we live on and a better way for people to treat each other. I was not alone, lots of other people had the same dreams as mine and my husband of a year had the same dreams plus a few of his own. Our parents, who had worked hard all their lives to give us kids a better life than they'd had, really thought we were mad when we told them we were going back to the land. Why, they asked, did we want to return to the 'old days'? Well, my ancestors, Irish Catholics, who arrived here in Oz as convicts, were all farm workers, perhaps it still runs in the blood, that tie with the land.

In the best Aussie tradition of 'have a go', we did just that. With our little horde of GRs carefully packed up, we sallied forth to find our piece of land with, at the time, \$50 in the bank. In a very short time we found it just outside of Tenterfield – a five-acre farmlet with house, two acres in orchard, three paddocks and some tin sheds, all to rent for \$10 a week. The house was over 100 years old, there was no electricity, no phone, no running water and no bathroom, and we did a crash course in the vagaries of fuel stoves, kero fridges,

gasoline lamps and making our own bread.

The years passed and GR was always there with the answer to our myriad problems, either directly from the magazine or from a reader. On cold winter nights before our log fire we would read and reread our GRs or answer our GR mail. We felt we held an interest in the lives of all the other GR family, that no matter what some reader could always help us. Our little farm thrived. We even built a mud brick barn with GR in one hand and shovel in the other. Our three acre paddock we'd turned into an organic 'market garden' making just enough for us to live.

Then on a Christmas Eve my life was forever changed. An accident killed my husband and two kids and seriously injured me. The 'farm' was lost along with the dream. So I've had to turn around and find another dream. You know, there's no shame in never attaining your dream, the only shame is in never having a dream. GR has brought me many friends, none of whom I've ever personally met and probably never will, but we've still come to know something of each other.

In a world obsessed with self and the rights of that self, a world lacking in civility, respect, decency and manners and a world of increasing aggression, GR, in its own small way, keeps alive the standards of yesteryear, when it wasn't

the self that mattered it was the family and the wider community that did and that people felt safe in, loved and protected by. The old Aussie ethos was forged by incredible hardship and suffering – that mateship which enabled people to survive because they helped each other. People today yearn for a 'real life' and GR by helping to keep alive all the old skills and the personal attitudes of an earlier time, meets the needs of many who want to take back control of their lives again. By growing their own food, making do and learning old skills they'll be able to survive the hard times ahead in the not too distant future.

For one reason or another we all can't have a 100 or even one acre in the country. We must take note that a GR lifestyle is not necessarily based totally on the land, that it's foremost an attitude of the heart, mind and soul.

I know GR will still be here in another 25 years, and if I'm still here – I fully intend to be – I'll still be sending in my yearly subscription. Remember, our greatest glory doesn't lie in never falling, but, rising every time we do fall.

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## Baubles For Your Christmas Tree

These are decorations that are easy and fun to make and look great.



### You will need

- old Christmas cards, wrapping paper
- ball-shaped things (you can use whatever is at hand at your place - small unripe fruits, polystyrene or papier mache balls)
- old cardboard (you could use old boxes)
- PVA glue
- ribbon
- gold /silver Textas

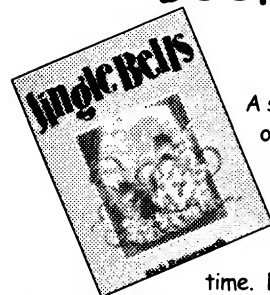
### Method

Cut out images from the old cards and wrapping paper. Cut cardboard into circles, hearts or shapes similar to the Xmas images you have chosen. Glue the images onto the cardboard shapes and/or the ball shapes you have chosen or made. Coat with a thick layer of PVA glue (it paints on an opaque white but dries clear and shiny). Then use gold/silver Textas or anything else you can think of to further decorate. Make a hole toward the top of each decoration with scissors or a skewer and hang with ribbon.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Jingle Bells

by Nick Butterworth

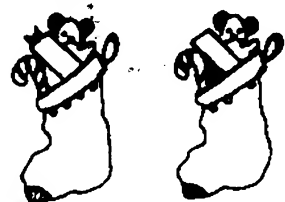


A sort of cute old-fashioned story and of course Christmas is a sort of cute old-fashioned time. Two little farm mice who are always being harassed by a cat devise a tricky scheme to foil him at Christmas time. Lovely illustrations accompany the story and the book has the novelty of a jingling bell tied to it.

H/b, Harper Collins, RRP \$19.95.

## Spot The Difference

There are six differences between these two Christmas stockings. Can you find them?

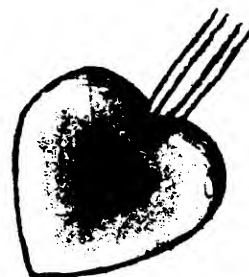


## CHRISTMAS HEARTS

These heart shaped biscuits with colourful glistening centres look beautiful hanging from the Christmas tree or at a window. You could also wrap them in cellophane and give as small gifts. The recipe given here for the heart biscuit base is a wholemeal shortbread but you could use a gingerbread.

### You will need

- 250 g butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup castor sugar
- $2\frac{1}{2}$  cups wholemeal plain flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup rice flour
- boiled lollies, crushed



### Method

Soften butter and combine with sugar until fluffy. Sift the dry ingredients and mix together with the butter and sugar to form a stiff dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth. Roll out to about 5 mm thickness. Cut out large hearts using a cookie cutter or approximate with a knife. Place heart shapes on a greased and floured baking tray. Cut a smaller heart in the middle of each one and fill it with crushed boiled lollies. With a skewer, make a hole toward the top centre of the heart. Bake in a moderately slow oven for about 15 - 20 minutes or until lightly browned. When cool, hang with pieces of ribbon.

## REXA GOES WILD



Lettie and her family will have to be careful with all the treats around at Christmas time. Last Christmas Rexa the Red Heeler snuck the chocolate decorations hanging from the tree!

# IN THE KITCHEN

With Christmas coming up it's good to have some recipes on hand that make for easy entertaining. Colourful dips are a tasty attractive addition to a festive table, and can be served with crudites, dry biscuits, or our savoury gluten-free potato flan.

## CAPSICUM AND HERB DIP

2 lge red capsicum, halved and seeds removed

3 cloves garlic, minced

selection of fresh herbs, chopped finely: parsley, thyme, oregano etc  
olive oil

black pepper to taste

a little water or vegetable stock to thin dip to required consistency

Spread capsicum halves with a little olive oil and bake them until soft. In a food processor or blender, mix the capsicum with the water/stock and garlic until smooth. Place in a serving dish, stir in pepper and herbs.

## BASIL DIP

3 cups basil

handful parsley

small tub soft cream cheese

1 cup pine nuts, dry roasted until golden brown

2 cloves garlic, minced

pepper to taste

Blend all ingredients together until smooth.

Both dips can be served with a selection of sliced, fresh, raw vegetables. The crunchiness of celery, carrot and snow peas is a great combination with the smooth, rich flavours of the dips.

## POTATO FLAN

3 potatoes, peeled and coarsely grated

2 eggs

1/2 cup milk

pinch of nutmeg

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

salt and pepper to taste

Beat eggs. Add other ingredients and mix well. Spread into a well-greased pie pan and bake in a moderately hot oven, until firm and browned on top. Serve hot or cold with the dips.

## BARBECUED FRUIT KEBABS

Thread onto metal skewers your choice of cubed fruit: apricots, mangos, strawberries, kiwi fruit, dates, firm peaches, pawpaw, pineapple.

Brush generously with a marinade of

2 tablespoons passionfruit pulp, 2 tablespoons rum or brandy, 1/2 cup mango juice, 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon.

Wrap each kebab in foil and refrigerate 1-2 hours. When ready, cook quickly over a barbecue flame, turning often.

Can be served with a hot sauce made from the marinade.

While you're catching up on some Christmas cheer with friends or neighbours, let the kids loose in the kitchen. A packet of muffins can easily be turned into mini pizzas. They are quick to make and the kids can do the preparing and cooking. Serve as snacks, or turn into a more substantial meal with the addition of salad or vegetables.

## SKEETA'S MAGIC MUFFINS

1 packet wholemeal muffins – enough for 1 muffin for each person

tomato paste

cheese – thin slices

A selection of ingredients to use as

topping: mushrooms and capsicum; ham and pineapple; sliced tomato and zucchini; mixed fresh herbs and garlic.

Split muffins and toast each half lightly. Spread a small amount of tomato paste onto each half. Top with whatever ingredients you fancy and cover with slices of cheese. Bake in oven or place under the griller until cheese has melted.

## SEASONAL FRUIT PUNCH

3 bottles mineral or soda water

3 cups apricot nectar

3 cups mango juice

small handful mint leaves, bruised

1-2 ripe mangos, peeled and diced

2 cups chopped ripe apricots

2 cups sliced strawberries

tipple of choice, optional

Marinate fruits and mint in juices, including any that comes from the dicing/slicing process, for several hours. Add chilled mineral or soda water and some ice cubes just prior to serving. If serving adults add 2-3 cups of preferred tipple.



Skeeta serving up her favourite magic muffins.



# THE QUEENSLANDER HOUSE

## A RENAISSANCE

by K Ostila, Montville, Qld.

What is this house termed the 'Queenslander' and how did it evolve? The northern Australian house has evolved incredibly over the past two hundred years. The first settlements for the majority of people would have been around the mines where the dwellings were simple miners' tents. In the more permanent settlements, these dwellings were modified by a roof and extensions to cater for the kitchen and laundry. Not until the early 1800s when cut timber was processed into easy-to-handle lengths and sizes which were easily transportable and the factory-produced steel (wire) nails became available, did the Queenslander begin to take shape and create its own vernacular.

### VERANDAHS

The early pioneers, at first, would have transplanted their own familiar architecture, but confronted by two types of climates – the tropical coastal wet belt which is warm and humid with the wet atmosphere changing little by day or night, and the inland hot, dusty and dry climate which has long hot summers and short cold winters – they soon introduced verandahs to provide protection and shade around the house. These verandahs offered a welcome refuge from the heat and the glare of the sun and, during rain periods, windows could remain open to help the air circulate. Today the verandahs are decorated with ornate balustrades and brackets in cast iron or timber. There is a diversity in the different types of shutters and screens and of course the various entrance ways. Even the staircase leading up to the verandahs can be elaborate or simple and have a double or single starting point.

### HIGHSET

More characteristic of the Queenslander is that it is mounted on stumps. Initially, these were low level stumps just allowing a flat platform floor to be built without worrying about the contours of the

ground. It did not take long to realise that increasing the height of the stumps was an economical way to double the floor area. The extra space under the house was useful for drying clothes during the wet season. It was good for storage and work activities and also provided a sheltered play area for children, being cooler in summer as it was protected from the sun by the house. Increasing the height of the stumps also exposed the house and the verandah to any breeze. Today the stumps are camouflaged or disguised by skirting panels or completely enclosed to provide privacy under the house.

### ROOFING

In the late 1800s timber roof shingles and other roof materials were replaced with corrugated iron, mainly because of its lightness, strength and durability, and,



after its construction, it required little or no maintenance to keep it watertight. Unfortunately, the metal roof created its own problem because it acted as a heat source, heating up everything under it, including the people. The early pioneers suffered or just moved out onto the verandah area, or under the house, whereas later builders overcame this problem by introducing the gable roofline crowned by an ornamental finial which made the house easier to ventilate. However, the basic pyramid roof is still popular and many different designs of ventilator panels can still be seen. Mod-

ern introductions have been ceiling insulation and ceiling fans and even air conditioners.

### INTERIOR

The interiors of these early houses were mainly open plan, with archways providing a natural boundary between rooms and hallways. Above the internal doorways fretwork was used to allow free airflow. Many of the external doorways which opened onto the verandahs had detailed stained glass to provide privacy yet at the same time let in dappled sunlight.

So it seems Australia's Queenslander house is essentially a lightweight timber and iron structure which is primarily the product of special local circumstance.

### A REVIVAL

In recent years, the people of the north have become increasingly aware of their heritage. This awareness is reflected in the popularity of the older style buildings. This appreciation of and affection for the older buildings will help ensure the continuation of the characteristic domestic architecture for which Queensland is so well known.

Today, many of these older houses are being relocated from their original position to a new environment where they undergo refurbishment to bring the old Queenslander back to its former glory. Indeed, house removalists displaying these preloved buildings in their sale yards will organise the transportation of the two or more parts of the house and the rejoining of the parts of the house and the roof back together and mounted on 'pigsties' in readiness for restumping.

Generally speaking the length of the load size is not overly important but the width is limited to 8.5 metres and the load height, including the trailer, is limited to 5 metres. The average costing per load over a distance of about 150 kilo-

metres is \$8000. Dependent upon the shape of the house, it can often be done with just one shift. To save money, the purchaser can organise the necessary council fees, plans and the necessary electrical, plumbing and paint work. Purchasers must also be aware that council inspections are required before the removal, during re-installation and on completion. Some councils also require a bond to ensure completion is timely and to council satisfaction.

Similarly, many architects today realise the Queenslander's worth and are designing and building new houses

using the available modern-day materials to produce replicas of a bygone era; new antiques which sit far better in the north than the brick and tile house design of the south.

There is an open friendliness about these houses which, like their owners, is characteristic of the warmer regions of Australia. They have come to reflect a lifestyle which is a unique expression of the way people have adapted themselves to an environment vastly different from that of their past. These qualities have also given the Queenslander an individual Australian character not found elsewhere.

## THE LEMONADE TREE

The Lemonade tree is believed to be a cross between a Meyer lemon and an Emperor mandarin. It is believed to have originated in northern Queensland. The tree fruits the year round and does well in most climates. A vigorous grower, it produces lots of fruit. The fruit has a sweet lemon flavour and peels easily. It can be eaten fresh from the tree or juiced, but is not a substitute for lemons in cooking.

Gaelle Murray

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# CHRISTMAS TAKES THE CAKE

by Pam Odijk, Bribie Island, Qld. Photograph by Herman Odijk.

Christmas just wouldn't be the same without its traditional rich cakes and puddings. It's the time of year when many of us forget about diets and cholesterol levels for a week or two and allow ourselves to indulge in the comforting nostalgic treats of childhood.

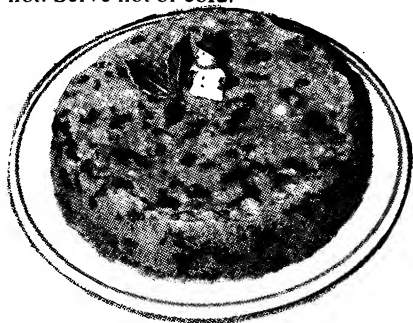
Even during wartime, with its many food restrictions, people contrived and adapted so their families would not be without these perennial favourites. I hope you enjoy these recipes, from my family to yours.

## FAMILY FAVOURITES

### My Mother's Traditional Christmas Pudding

1½ cups plain flour  
½ tsp baking soda  
125 g breadcrumbs  
250 g butter or margarine  
250 g brown sugar  
750 g mixed fruit  
125 g mixed peel or 4 tbsp marmalade jam  
1 tsp each of nutmeg and spice  
4 eggs  
3 tbsp brandy or rum

Cream the butter and sugar, add eggs and beat well. Add the brandy or rum. Stir in the fruits, flour, soda and spices, then add the breadcrumbs. Mix well. Tie up in a strong pudding cloth (calico), allowing a little room for the pudding to swell as it cooks. Plunge into boiling water and boil for 3½ hours. Turn out of the cloth while still hot. Serve hot or cold.



### My Christmas Cake

125 g glace cherries  
125 g mixed peel  
500 g mixed fruit  
375 g sultanas  
½ cup sherry  
250 g butter or margarine  
4 large eggs  
1 cup brown sugar (firmly packed)  
1 tsp lemon essence  
1 tsp vanilla essence  
2 cups plain flour  
2 tsp mixed powdered spice  
1 dessertspoon Parisian essence  
125 g almonds or macadamias (optional)

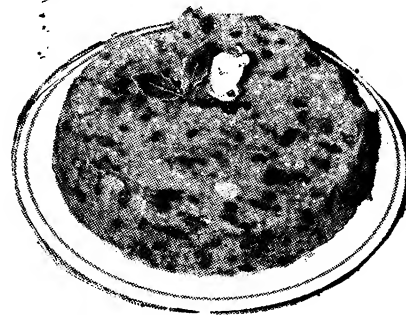
Place mixed fruit, mixed peel, sultanas, cherries (halved), nuts in a large bowl. Mix well and pour over the sherry, cover, seal, and leave for at least 24 hours (preferably for a week).

Sift flour and spice and add to the fruit mixture, stirring with a wooden spoon. In mixer bowl, beat the butter lightly only until it clings to the side of the basin but does not change colour. Add the sugar and beat a little longer until combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating only until each egg has combined with the mixture.

Add the butter, sugar and egg mixture, to the fruit and flour mixture. Lastly, add the essences and mix the cake well with a wooden spoon. Place the mixture into a prepared cake tin (lined with cardboard or stiff paper, then aluminium foil, then buttered paper). Level the top of the cake and bake at 150° C for three and a half hours.

### Christmas Holly Wreath Biscuits

250 g butter or margarine  
3½ cups self-raising flour  
1 cup sugar  
½ tsp salt  
2 eggs  
1½ tsp vanilla essence  
extra egg white  
confectionery green leaves and bits



of candied cherries for decoration

Cream butter and add sugar gradually. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition. Add vanilla. Mix in the sifted flour with the salt. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill overnight.

Roll out dough to a thickness of 0.5 cm. Cut out with a scone cutter and cut out the centre to make a ring (wreath). Bake the rings at 150° C until lightly brown. Cool. Brush each ring with egg white and decorate with sliced green leaves and bits of candied cherries. Bake again in a moderate oven for 5 minutes until set. Makes about 40.

## SOME WARTIME CHRISTMAS CAKES

### Cake No 1

250 g butter  
1 cup brown sugar  
5 sml eggs  
6 tbsp milk  
250 g raisins  
250 g currants  
375 g sultanas  
125 g dates  
1½ cups SR flour  
1½ cups plain flour  
1 dsp caramel flavouring

You must however, substitute 3 tablespoons sherry or brandy for half the milk if the cake has to be kept for any time. (Pour the sherry over the mixed fruits and allow to stand overnight.)

Cream butter and sugar and gradually add the eggs, one at a time. Add the milk alternately with the sifted flours. Stir in

the fruits. Spoon into a prepared tin and place in a hot oven. Turn the heat down immediately to 150°C and allow to cook slowly for 2½ hours. Test with a skewer. Store in the tin until ready to serve.

#### Cake No 2

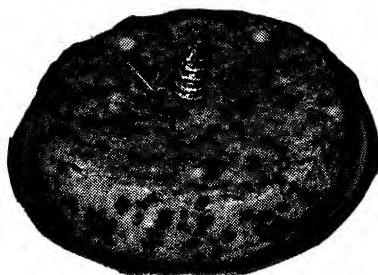
- 1 cup water
- 125 g butter or margarine
- 250 g raisins
- ¾ cup sugar
- ⅛ tsp bicarbonate of soda

Put all these ingredients into a large saucepan. Bring to the boil. Boil for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to become quite cold.

Then sift 2 cups self-raising flour into a basin. Make a well in the centre and add the fruit mixture, 1 tablespoon of coffee essence and 1 well beaten egg. Mix thoroughly.

Pour into a well greased 18 cm round cake tin and bake in a moderate oven for about 1½ hours. Turn out carefully and when cold store in an airtight tin.

However, if you wish to store this cake for some time, 3 tablespoons of sherry or brandy will need to be added during the second stage. Compensate by reducing the water by this amount.



## ALCOHOL UNCERTAINTY

Studies from many countries have been confirming again and again that moderate alcohol consumption appears to lower heart disease and decrease the rates of death from many causes. The reason for the protective effect of alcohol is by no means clear and it seems likely that a range of factors are involved. Firstly, alcohol relaxes you and lowers stress. Secondly, it raises the blood concentration of the beneficial HDL fraction of cholesterol. It decreases the risk of blood clots (ie thrombosis which is a major cause of heart attacks) by increasing the blood concentration of the anti-clotting agent, plasminogen activator inhibitor. Also, both red and white wines contain high concentrations of salicylate compounds, which are similar to aspirin – a drug now widely used to prevent coronary heart disease. Research has also indicated that wine can be an effective antibacterial agent for the destruction of bacterial pathogens in the gut (such as salmonella and E coli). The big uncertainty seems to be about what exactly *moderate* alcohol consumption is. Different authorities around the world vary in their descriptions of *moderate* and it is well known that too much alcohol can cause liver, heart and many other types of disease.

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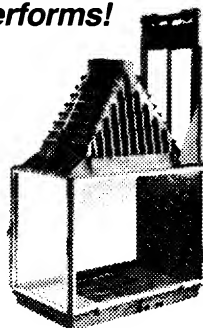
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# BUYING A FARM

## MEETING COSTS

by Pat Coleby, Maldon, Vic.

Okay, if you have just won the lottery you can ignore most of this section!

Last time I wrote about paying for your farm. This article enlarges on that and should be taken very seriously. Money hassles ruin many a good relationship and can turn one's dreams sour too easily. Paying for the farm might be an ongoing process with one or all the people involved staying in full-time jobs and saving up as much as possible. Alternatively, it might take the form of buying first and working it out afterwards – not a happy idea because it depends on a very committed effort and maintaining superb health, both of which are quite possible but do not always occur.

Having at least two-thirds of the cash up front is desirable, unless you wish to enrich the banks and pay far more than the farm is worth by buying it on a huge mortgage. Study the pros and cons of the latter procedure. I had always vowed I would never do it but when I went into partnership with my progressive younger son I allowed myself to be talked into it.

We sold a farm for \$82,000, having bought it incredibly run down at \$50,000 five years before. Sounds easy money, but it was five years of hard slog, with my son building most of the extra sheds etc and working off farm as well. I was turning in a regular milk cheque 365 days a year and restoring the garden, which fed us, and refencing 80 percent of the farm, as well as maintaining the soil.

We bought the next farm for \$85,000 and took out a \$15,000 mortgage to cover fencing, land improvement and putting up all the necessary dairy and farm

sheds – all bar the garages which were there.

The mortgage rate was 11.5 percent. Within two and a half years it went up to 22.5 percent and became an ever-present nightmare. I met many people in all walks of life who had borrowed up to 80 percent of the required capital and found at the end of five years they owed more than they had at the beginning, in spite of paying everything they could spare – they went under in large numbers. We hung in there, and again it was wall-to-wall slog 365 days a year. My son worked off the farm, buying most of the plant he needed to set up as a metal worker, and I paid off the farm by dairying as before. We finally sold it five years later, again converted from a total wreck to a very productive small farm with excellent amenities. We made enough on the deal to upgrade to a farm in the \$100,000 bracket without a mortgage. Think that one through very seriously.

In Oz the protocol seems to be to always own your own land but in the UK even the biggest farmers rarely if ever do

this – renting is a viable long-term option. It should, however, all be very carefully drawn up by a solicitor who is used to that kind of operation. Having spent the first 20 years here rearing our family, renting and putting large amounts of work and material into that farm I vowed I would not do that again either, I would work for myself and I did just that. (We did not get a solicitor draw anything up, we could not afford such luxuries at that stage anyway.) But I doubt if many people would want to be nose down and bottom up as hard as we did it. Quality of life has to be considered, although we did all enjoy our 20 years of very basic living (no mod cons at all) extremely.

As mentioned earlier, count the cost of land regeneration in your purchase price. (It will always have to be done in this country unless you buy from someone like me!) No matter which of the options in the farming line you wish to take up, good land will make it all work so much better. Once this has been done (allow about \$250 per hectare over three or four years), good farming practices

should maintain the land without much more expense.

This of course depends on what type of farming you envisage. Selling hay and crop, for example, while bringing in a reasonable return in good years, is also expensive to implement. What goes off the farm has to be returned in some form. Again, as mentioned in an earlier article, you must spend \$110 on a soil analysis if you have a choice of farms to buy. This will tell you the basic facts about the organic matter – only too often disastrously low –



A proliferation of weeds on a property always points to soil deficiencies so one of the first jobs after buying land is to get a soil analysis organised.

and the status of the lime minerals, calcium, magnesium and gypsum (calcium sulphate). The cost of analysis includes monitoring the total locked-up phosphorus. A mixture of the three lime minerals just mentioned costs about \$250 per hectare to get the soil back into line, but the organic matter when very low is another story and can mean ongoing expense if cropping and hay farming are the object of the exercise.

On my present block I have the best of both worlds and it's an option worth considering. I bought a run-down mid-century weatherboard and fibro house (I have since replaced the latter with wood as it was too cold.), and have a six acre lease from the Department of Conservation and Environment for a very reasonable annual rent as long as I look after it. It has cost approximately \$500 to remineralise the half of the land which can take vehicles. The other half consists of mining relics of archeological significance. The paddock was as bad as could be: pH 4.1 shale, growing stinkweed in abundance, and had been eaten out by my predecessor's horses and countless rabbits for years.

It cost me \$5000 to fully refence and rabbit proof it. Normally I would have done this job myself, but due to the heavy

work commitment I subcontracted the job. One year after the first top dressing – dolomite two tonnes to the hectare – the stinkweed had completely retired and capeweed and other low pH weeds and grasses were beginning to show up. I never thought I would be pleased to see capeweed, but I was because land that supports it needs very little to pull it into shape. Two more top dressings, a tonne of dolomite and the same of gypsum to the hectare for the second top dressing and then a tonne each of lime, dolomite and gypsum to the hectare for the final dressing which was put on in May 1998. The pH is now 6.4 and the paddock is growing excellent grass, healthy 'weeds' (plantains etc), and clover. The goats and one horse live cheaply and I have visits from various natives such as echidnas and the occasional wallaby. It is a useful and enjoyable addition to the garden and house. The rent about equals what the rates would be if it was mine.

After a programme like the above, little if any maintenance is needed, except the ever-present job of fence checking, to exclude enterprising rabbits and repair damage caused by fallen trees, which has to be done on all farms.

Large acreages are not required for a

successful enterprise. If the farm is for a retirement project the above advice still applies, but choose a type of farming that can be run fairly easily from the physical and financial point of view. I have two or three 'farmers' on my books who grow garlic most successfully on small highly developed acreages. Others who have large glorified vegie gardens specialise in organically grown crops for a private round of discerning customers and everyone seems happy with the result. Each one of these depended heavily on the mineral analysis.

Next time, the last article in this series discusses the locality and the logistics of moving day.

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# SUN POWER

by Ian McNicol, Melbourne, Vic.

Solar energy can be used for water heating. In a solar water heater, water from the storage cylinder is passed through the collector panel, where it gains heat from the sun and returns to the storage cylinder at a higher temperature, usually about 70 degrees Celsius.

There are a number of different designs for solar water systems. For urban domestic use, however, the flat plate collector is the most common.

In a mild climate like Sydney, the sun will typically provide around 70 percent of the energy required for heating the water, while electricity, gas or a solid fuel heater is required to provide the remaining 30 percent.

Solar water heating systems are suitable for households which are medium to large users of hot water. A correctly designed and installed system can reduce the water heating portion of domestic electricity or gas bills by anything from 30 percent to 70 percent, depending on the gas or electricity tariffs, and local climatic conditions.

For solar water heating to be a viable option, however, the house design and placement of the collector panels must meet the following requirements:

- A north, or near-north facing roof area.
- An optimum roof angle of 45 degrees, although angles between 25 degrees and 65 degrees are acceptable..
- Buildings, trees or other objects should not shade the collector during most of the day. (Note that deciduous trees, which are not a problem in winter, may cause problems in spring and summer.)

The average household of two adults and two children, which meets these requirements, would need approximately four square metres of collector area and a storage cylinder with a capacity of around 300 litres.

In some situations more than four square metres of collector area, or a framework allowing the collector to be angled correctly, may be necessary. This will be the case if the roof does not have a north-facing area, where the roof area or angle is not within the required limits, where shading occurs, or for larger families.

Solar water heating systems are more expensive to install than electric or gas storage systems, but the extra expense of the solar water heating system will usually be covered in six to twelve years, with eight to ten years being typical for a four to five person household. The actual payback period will vary throughout Australia depending on local tariffs and climatic conditions. Keeping in mind that a solar hot water system has a life of between 15 and 30 years, it is evident that significant savings may be realised over the lifetime of the system.

The best time to convert to solar water heating is when your present system needs replacing. Most existing hot water or storage cylinders (not 'quick recovery' units) can be converted for connection to a solar system. It is not recommended that a cylinder with a capacity of less than 180 litres be used.

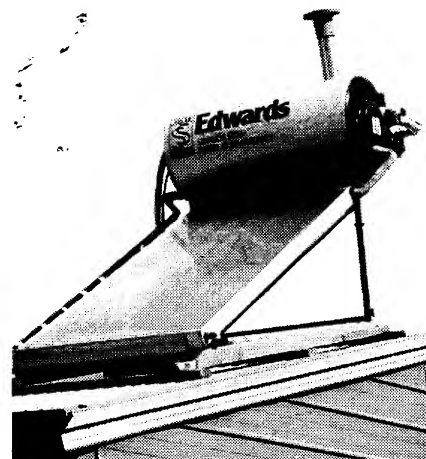
## PHOTOVOLTAIC CELLS

The sun's energy can be converted directly into electricity using solar or photovoltaic cells to provide the electricity supply to a home. While solar panels can be used to provide electricity in many locations around Australia, they are most feasible in remote locations where the cost of providing an electricity supply can be high.

Solar cells are usually made from silicon and are able to convert sunlight directly into electrical energy. When exposed to light, an individual solar cell produces about half a volt of DC (direct current) electricity. The individual cells are connected together in series to form a solar panel with a standard DC voltage output, and the panels can, in turn, be connected together to form a larger array to meet the power requirements of particular households.

As with solar water heating collectors, the solar panels must be orientated towards the north so that they receive maximum exposure to the sun.

To ensure the continuity of the electricity supply, batteries are necessary to store the electricity for use during periods of little or no sunshine (such as during the nighttime). The solar panels are usually connected to a bank of 12 volt



batteries and some lighting and domestic appliances can be run directly from this DC supply. Also, a special piece of electrical equipment known as an inverter is required to convert the direct current power supply to the 240 volt AC (alternating current) power supply required by many domestic appliances.

In addition to providing electricity for running domestic lighting and appliances, solar power can be used to run pumps on remote dam sites and for electric stock fencing. Special stand-alone solar powered ventilation fans and garden lighting are also available.

Note that a \$500 cash rebate is available to people who install a solar hot water system in selected regions of NSW.

Max Mosher at The Energy Advisory and Referral Service (NSW) can provide more information Ph: 02-9319-0022, or try the Energy Information Centre (Vic) Ph: 1300-363-744.



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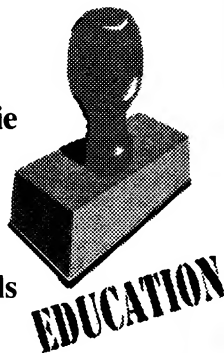
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# A BETTER LIFESTYLE

by Anne Mayne, Frangrant Farm, Mudgee, NSW.



The first issue of *Grass Roots* I have on file is August, 1984 (GR 44), and I have every copy issued since that time. Back then, I was working in Sydney for an international bank in a very high pressure job. I dreamed of escaping the rat race and heading for the country. I was so intent on my goal that I wrote down every penny I spent in a big exercise book and had set amounts to save from every payday. I borrowed money and reinvested it at a much higher interest rate which added considerably to my savings. At that time there was a Government Savings Grant for first home owners and I also took advantage of that offer, although the paperwork and red tape involved with this scheme took over nine months – much like a pregnancy!

At long last after much searching over many months, I found something I could afford – a four-room 'shack' and accompanying sheds on 30 acres at Mudgee for the grand sum of \$16,000! I

couldn't have been more thrilled than if I had won Lotto! I recall standing in the middle of the property amongst all the timber without another house in sight, and thinking, 'It's all mine!'. After a very bad marriage in another country where I had left everything behind, this was a new start for me and gave me the security I craved.

It would be a number of years before my family could afford to move to Mudgee, but in the meantime we trekked back and forth about every second weekend. We worked in the garden, cleared timber, planted trees, and improved the house. I was totally thrilled with our purchase and every little improvement was a milestone. Those weekends and occasional holidays were some of the happiest moments of my life. There was so much satisfaction to be gained from each little change or addition. The anticipation as to how things would look or would have grown with every visit was to be

savoured. Looking back through photographs, I find it amazing that we achieved so much from so little.

I loved our early morning barbecue breakfasts when we would all pile in an ancient Holden ute and chug up the hill to cut timber for the winter months. We cooked eggs, bacon, 'Annie's Deadly Baked Beans', sausages, and toast on a stick, all washed down with enamel mugs of hot sweet tea flavoured with a gum leaf or two. My baby daughter would be rugged up in an equally ancient pram, and my young son would be helping to stack wood, or build the fire.

We worked so hard, but it was so satisfying. At the end of the day, we would sit on our front porch with our wine and 'nibblies' and watch the sun go down. I recall devouring the magazine from cover to cover, storing up all the little tips that would help us later with planting, or sick animals, or preserving and cooking. I especially loved the



Resourcefulness and presentation are features of Fragrant Farm.

Right: Bric-a-brac barn converted from an old shed.

Below: Mailbox converted from a drum.



Feedback pages; I felt it was like a sack load of mail, and it was very personal to read of people's hopes and plans. I enjoyed the articles too, and even contributed some myself.

We were finally able to move to our weekend, which was another experience altogether. Living permanently was different from being an occasional visitor. What was a novelty became a nuisance – lack of water, a generator, isolation with a young baby. We realised our bush block was too far out of town on a terrible road, and sadly we would have to consider a move. After all our hard work, it was a nice little country cottage with a pretty garden on heavily timbered and rocky land not useful for much of anything.

We found a good buy closer to town on a main road, with a big house, dams, and all useable land. Best of all, the property would lend itself well for my ultimate dream – a tourist venue!

We had not planned to start up a tourist business immediately upon our move to this property, but five years ago,

my husband lost his job, and as with most country towns, it is difficult to find work. We therefore created our own jobs. We started up the 'Fragrant Farm', and have gone from strength to strength. We have a herb nursery, a craft shop, and a friendship farm. We started catering for bus groups on

our verandahs, and kept buying more tables and chairs to accommodate them. When we realized how lucrative the bus groups were, we decided to borrow money and build a permanent restaurant area, which seats 60 people. This has been an enormous asset with many wonderful functions, weddings, parties, and catering for over 300 groups in the past few years.

Our children are actively involved with our business, with Christopher, 15, helping serve customers, mow the grass and use the whipper snipper. He also chops wood, pumps water and helps his father with all the animals in our friendship farm. Suzie, who is 8, is quite the entrepreneur, and has her own business, 'Suzie's Small World', with a wonderful collection of porcelain and international dolls, miniatures and dolls' houses. She charges \$1 a head to visit and gives all the spiel about everything. She is also very helpful showing visitors around the Friendship Farm, and gets out the baby ducks and guinea pigs for children to pat.

Our children have benefitted from living in the country. They are healthy, happy and occupied. They never complain of being bored as there is so much to do. They are very aware that the work on our farm helps us to live and that we all have to work together to make it happen.

We have been lucky to meet many wonderful visitors from all over Australia and overseas. We have almost completed our seventh visitors' book, and it is gratifying to read so many lovely comments on our presentation and friendliness. We have a lot of senior citizens groups visit us too, and we enjoy these groups very much, as they are so appreciative and are out to have a lovely time.

In response to some of my letters and articles in *Grass Roots*, I have met people who are interested in doing something similar to us in other areas. I have also made some wonderful penfriends over the years through the magazine. I look forward to meeting some of these special friends one day soon (Phillipa and Ngaire in New Zealand, and Elaine in Barellan).

Congratulations to *Grass Roots* on twenty-five years of publishing – a remarkable feat! Your publication of such a very special magazine has inspired so many people, forged so many friendships, provided so much information on such a vast range of subjects, and above all, encouraged people to dream about a better lifestyle for their families!

# The Changing Face of Permaculture

by Martin Hirsch, Pomona QLD.

Throw the term permaculture into a ring of conversation and the name Bill Mollison will almost immediately pass everyone's lips. This remarkable and at times controversial Australian has been synonymous with permaculture over the best of a quarter-century. Mollison has decided to pass on the reins of the Tyalgum-based Permaculture Institute to younger people whose expertise and enthusiasm is expected to keep the movement in the forefront of public opinion-shaping, heading valiantly towards 2000 and beyond.

Bill Mollison himself, acknowledged as the co-founder of the permaculture movement, together with David Holmgren, went on to spearhead a national awakening towards safer, more sensible and sustainable forms of animal management and plant systems in which people could find purpose, peace and fulfillment.

Now 70 years old, Mollison is looking forward to returning to where it all began – Tasmania's temperate climate with its own peculiar challenges and the opportunity to spend more time writing.

Bill Mollison has been a teacher, a mentor to many, and an intrepid traveller, spreading 'the word' to the far-flung corners of the world, and indeed to anyone who was prepared to listen. He summed up those 25 years of untiring enterprise, saying there were few countries where he had not personally planted the seeds of permaculture. 'With my health in need of rehabilitation, I have decided to pass the rigorous duties of running a world-wide educational institute to a younger and fresher group, namely Geoff Lawton and associates who themselves are steeped in

overseas teaching experience,' he stated.

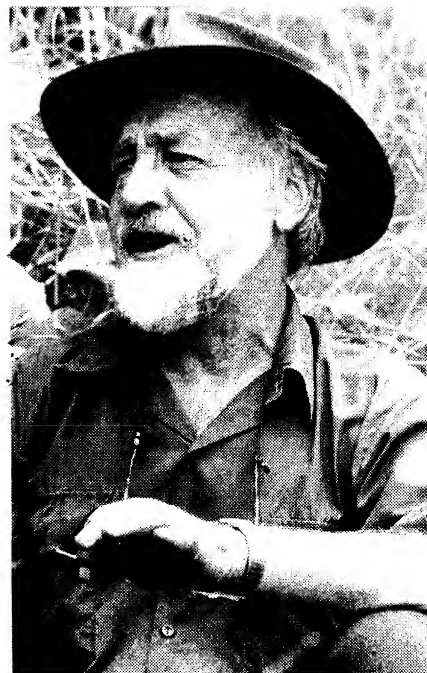
He expressed the wish that he would at last be able to have more time for fishing expeditions, knowing that the affairs of the Permaculture Institute, which he started in 1979 and is now known as the Permaculture Research Institute, are in good hands.

There are now some 250,000 permaculture designers worldwide in over 120 countries and much of their work is published and disseminated in 26 different languages.

Total retirement at this stage is not an option for the indefatigable Mollison who expects to continue pouring his energies into a Tasmanian permaculture venture, albeit on a much smaller scale than the operations at Tyalgum, NSW. Together with his wife Lisa he will research permaculture systems in a cool climate.

Geoff Lawton, a former Sunshine Coast resident who left his indelible stamp on the permaculture scene in Queensland while travelling frequently to teach overseas, is poised for the challenge at Tyalgum. He aims to continue the long-standing spirit of universal teaching and friendship among those whose primary motivation is sustainable living. He and partner Ngair Te Whiu have been appointed directors of the Permaculture Research Institute and will be working closely with a team of six people who live on the 150 acre site known as Tagari Farm where the Institute is located.

It is only fifteen years ago that Geoff Lawton himself completed a permaculture design certificate. Meanwhile, the knowl-



edge gathered in theory and practice has been passed on to permaculture students worldwide in North, Central and South America, Denmark, and throughout Australia. Implementations of permaculture designs in New Zealand, England and Costa Rica are largely the result of his efforts. Lawton counts multinational corporations, councils, communities and individuals among his many past and present clients.

Every two months, the doors of the Institute are thrown open to welcome new enrolments for a two-week Permaculture Design Certificate Course. Lawton and his team will retain a strong focus on training trainers, with equally strong emphasis on extensive hands-on work to be encouraged once a student has completed the course.

Design Certificate graduates of the Institute can further their studies by entering an on-ground training programme which imparts the practical elements of implementing a design system. A Diploma of Permaculture takes one year and is open to applicants internationally who want to receive a solid grounding in all facets of permaculture. The institute also readily conducts guided tours for visitors.

The new team has planned enthusiastically to take permaculture into the next century and broaden its influence. These plans include the establishment of a comprehensive bioregional database on the Internet Web, enabling web users to access specialists in various fields.

In an effort to duly recognise the im-

measurable accomplishments of permaculture co-founder Bill Mollison, the group has set up a special 'retirement fund' for him. 'There is no doubt that Bill Mollison has left us with a great springboard from which to implement massive change for the benefit of the entire planet. Bill has led his life the way he teaches his students, by returning all surplus energies back into the system,' a spokesperson for the Institute said.

In the same statement, the spokesperson appealed to supporters to donate \$20 or more to the Permaculture Research Trust Fund, adding that this would ensure Mollison had a retirement worthy of his service to the community.

For more information about the Institute or to donate to the trust fund readers can write to: The Permaculture Research Institute, PO Box 1, Tyalgum, NSW 2484.

### ----- RECYCLE PLASTIC BAGS IN THE GARDEN

Fill old plastic bags with potting mix and plant seedlings and cuttings in them or use old bags as mini-greenhouses over pots of frost-prone plants or tie them together to tie plants such as tomatoes to stakes.



Following a change of direction from Bill Mollison, co-founder of the permaculture movement, the new team at the Permaculture Research Institute is enthusiastic to take the permaculture message into the next century.

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## CRAFTY CHRISTMAS GIFTS

by Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island, Qld.

Christmas is a joyous time, rich with warmth and family togetherness. The spirit of the day itself, and the children's countdown to present giving and receiving time, make the season seem more special. Goodwill abounds at this time of the year and handmade gifts created with care and love, be they ever so inexpensive, add to the excitement.

### MOSAIC JEWEL BOX

Among my favourite easy-to-make gifts are crushed eggshell mosaic jewel boxes. Of course they don't have to be used for jewels, they can accommodate a variety of items. They are so simple to make, even a young child (with a little help) can cope with them.

#### Requirements

- PVA glue
- dried eggshells
- small box
- skewer or satay stick
- acrylic paint
- clear varnish
- fabric scraps for lining, if required

Begin a couple of weeks before you want to make a box to save all used eggshells. This shouldn't be difficult with all that Christmas cooking going on. You only need two or three eggshells for each box. Any small container, be it wood (cigar boxes are great), cardboard or plastic is suitable. If you prefer, you can buy lightweight unpainted wooden boxes at the bargain basement stores for as little as a dollar. However, I prefer to recycle containers at no cost.

#### Method

To prepare the eggshells, soak overnight in a bucket of half ammonia and half cold water, just sufficient to cover the eggshells. Next day, wearing rubber gloves, drain and rinse eggshells well. Place in the sun to dry, do not break them up at this stage. If any of the thin transparent lining of the shells is still clinging on, dispose of this by pulling it out carefully by hand.

If your box is wooden and has a hinged lid, work on the four sides of the box first and do the lid last. If you are

using a cardboard chocolate box or similar, a slightly different approach is necessary. Where the lid fits completely over the box, it is only the lid which is covered with the eggshell mosaic and the box remains plain.

The following instructions are for a wooden box with a hinged lid.

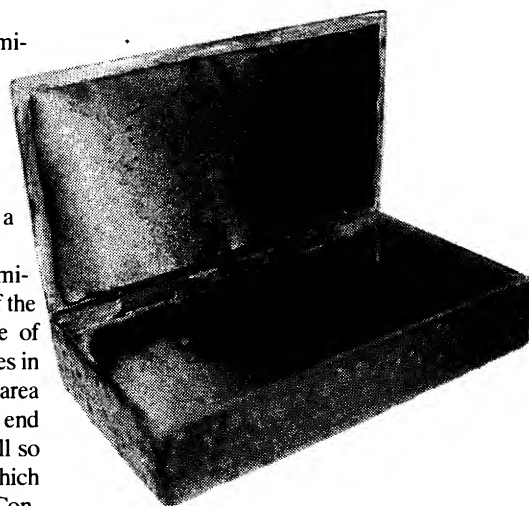
Using PVA glue (Aquadhere or similar), brush a small area of glue on one of the outer sides of the box. Select a piece of eggshell approximately three centimetres in diameter. Push the shell onto the glued area and break it up using a satay stick or the end of a pencil. Separate each piece of shell so none are touching. It is this spacing which helps to form the mosaic-like pattern. Continue in this manner on all four sides of box.

Next the lid can be worked, taking care not to touch with your fingers the already wet glue area. When surfaces are all filled in with the mosaic, place the box in the sun to dry. If children's fingers are a bit clumsy to handle the tiny eggshell pieces, give them a pair of tweezers to use.

Leave the box until next day before painting. Most PVA glues are touch-dry in 20 to 40 minutes. For maximum strength and dryness, it is best to leave it overnight, or longer in cold and damp conditions.

Paint of your choice of colour may now be applied. I find one coat of vinyl paint is sufficient. However, in the case of a chocolate box with pictures and printing on it, it's probably better to give it a white undercoat to start. When dry, I like to finish off with a light coat of clear varnish.

If you have a supply of both dark brown and white eggshells, then it is possible to



make a design of your choice from the two contrasting colours. Simple geometric designs are quite suitable, or silhouettes can be very interesting. This requires no paint, but needs to be finished with a coat of clear gloss.

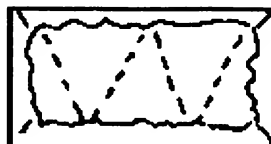
Care must be taken when gluing near the edges of the box. Make sure no little pieces of shell protrude over the edge. For a professional finish, I line my boxes with either velvet or satin depending on what my scrap bag has to offer. For added embellishment, a couple of satin roses glued onto the lid of the box can look terrific. For children's efforts, the box lining could just be coloured paper glued in.

#### Lining

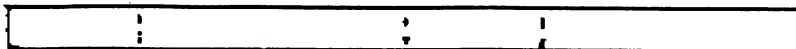
To line a small box you'll need cardboard scraps. Breakfast cereal packets will do nicely. You'll need a ruler, pencil, wadding and small pieces of fabric such as velvet.

Measure the inside base of the box and

#### Plan of Lining for Eggshell Mosaic Box

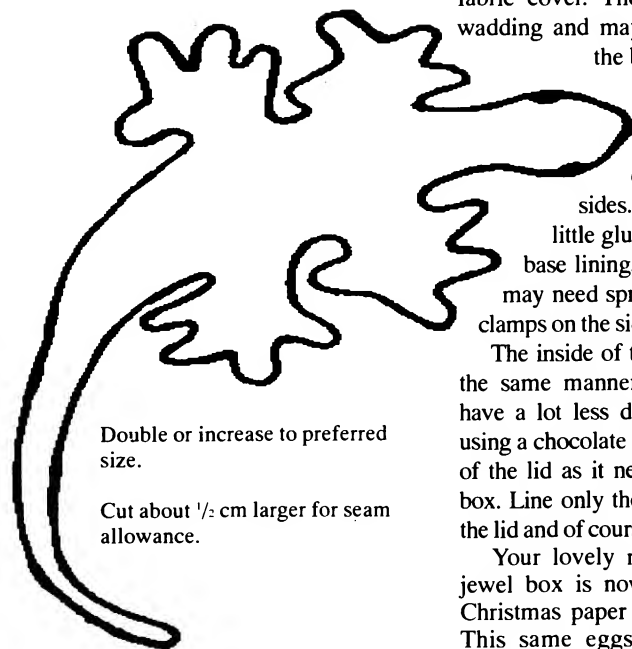


reverse side of base and lid lining



Shape of lining for sides of base (each box requires individual measuring).

## Template for Stuffed Gecko (not to size)



Double or increase to preferred size.

Cut about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm larger for seam allowance.

mark out a piece of cardboard, slightly less all around than this measurement. Lay a small amount of wadding over cardboard. Cut velvet about three or four centimetres larger than the cardboard. Place velvet over wadding and turn the whole thing upside down. Using needle and cotton, make large stitches across-ways to draw the velvet together so the padded side is smooth. Corners may be folded under. End off thread and the base lining is finished. Do not glue base-lining into box yet. The side of box lining needs to be fitted first.

For the four sides, measure a cardboard strip to go completely around inside in one piece, creasing at three corners. The fourth corner will be butted together. Here again the depth needs to be a tad shorter than the interior box depth measurement

to allow for the thickness of cardboard plus fabric. Try it for fit before cutting the fabric cover. The side lining needs no wadding and may simply be stitched at the back of the cardboard in the same way as the base.

Glue side lining onto box on all four sides. Then, after spreading a little glue on the underside of the base lining, press it into place. You may need spring clothes pegs or little clamps on the sides till the glue takes.

The inside of the lid is done in exactly the same manner, except the sides will have a lot less depth (if it has sides). If using a chocolate box, do not line the sides of the lid as it needs to fit snug over the box. Line only the underside of the top of the lid and of course the inside of the box.

Your lovely mosaic eggshell crafted jewel box is now ready to giftwrap in Christmas paper for that special person. This same eggshell mosaic technique may be applied to picture frames, vases and many other items you might like to rejuvenate.

## STUFFED GECKO

### Requirements

Suitable fabric could be stretch material in plain colours, preferably greens or browns with lighter colours for the underside.

fabric  
bead eyes  
wadding (for light gecko)  
sand (for heavy gecko)

### Method

Trace out the gecko shape, then use the template to draw shape onto fabric. Template provided can be enlarged to your requirements. You need a darker colour for the upper side and a lighter shade for

the underside. Pin the two right sides together and stitch up on the machine, taking a lot of care around the little feet. Leave sufficient opening at the mouth for turning out and stuffing. Before turning out, cut in fairly closely to your pencil line using very sharp scissors. Between the toes you need to cut right up to the stitching, otherwise there will be an ugly puckering when you turn it out.

To stuff with wadding, use a knitting needle or similar to push the stuffing right up to the tip of the toes and tail. Do not stuff too tightly because you want the toy to feel soft and friendly. If using sand, try a paper funnel to pour the sand in. Shake it till it reaches the extremities. Stitch up mouth by hand. Two bead eyes may be sewn into position and your cute little reptile is ready to be giftwrapped.

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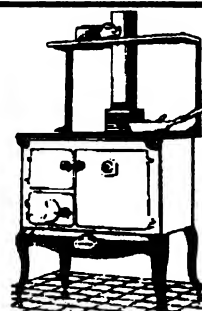
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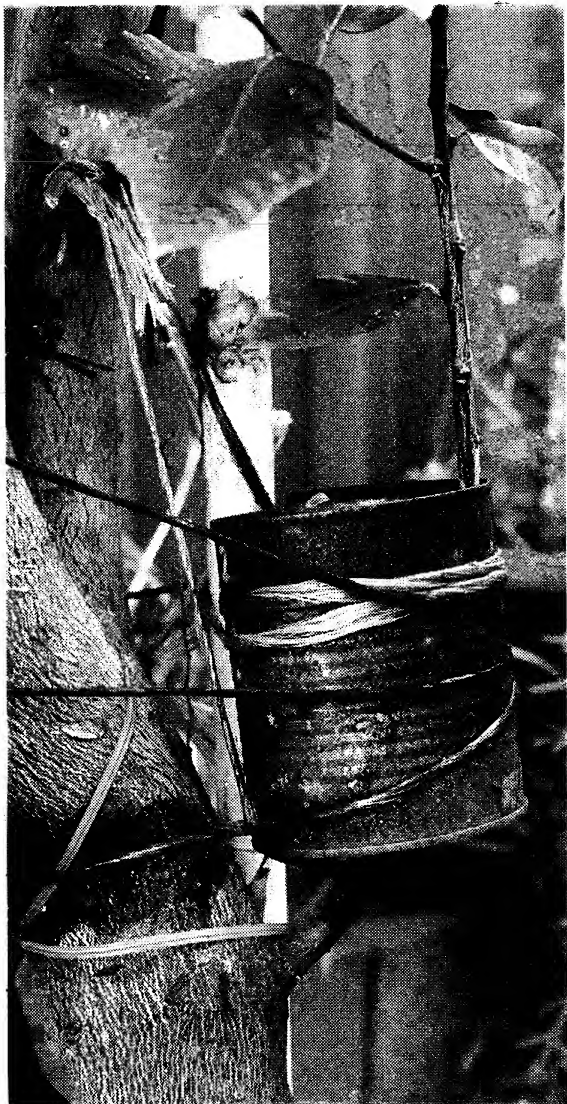
# MULTICULTURAL GARDENING

## Lemon Tree Propagation

by Mark Mackay, Novar Gardens, SA

In the previous issue I described how my Italian father-in-law, Enzo, has influenced my gardening, in particular his method for growing eggplants and tomatoes. This time I'll share his method of propagating lemon trees.

Lemon trees are a commonplace sight in backyards across the metropolitan area of South Australia. Enzo suggested that if we wanted he would create a lemon tree for us from an existing tree growing in his backyard, using a technique his father-in-law had shown him.



The technique involves making a new lemon tree from an existing branch of an already established lemon tree. If you want to try this method of growing a lemon tree, follow the steps detailed below.

## PROCEDURE

Obtain a large container made from a material which is easily cut through. We recycled a large metal food tin from the kitchen.

Cut the container down one side and across to the middle of the bottom.

In the bottom of the container it will be necessary to cut out a hole that is large enough to encompass the branch of the lemon tree that you wish to make into another independent tree.

Have a supply of enough potting mix or other suitable growing medium ready to fill the container once it has been placed on the tree branch.

On the branch that is going to be used to form the new tree cut a small section of the bark away around the entire circumference of the branch. You need to reach the wood. This is effectively ringbarking this branch.

Secure the container onto the branch. The bottom of the container should be lower than the ringbarking, which should be in the middle of the container. We used electrical tape.

Fill the container with the potting mix or growing medium. We bent the branch up so that the top of the container

was horizontal and watering was easier.

Keep moist at all times. This enables the ringbarked section to continue to live while the roots form. If the container dries out before the roots are formed the branch is likely to die.

After about six months or so check for root development and, if roots have developed, cut the branch off below the container and plant the new tree.

A tree grown in this manner will be the same as the fruiting section of the tree from which it came, but may differ from the rootstock. No doubt this method of establishing a fruit tree could be applied to other citrus varieties as well. I cannot, however, attest as to whether it works with other varieties of fruit trees.

Perhaps you too can begin to experiment with different methods of gardening and enjoy the fruits of your labours!



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# ROCK SOLID TICK CONTROL

by Martin Hirsch, Pomona, Qld.

Most hobby farmers at some time or another have to deal with the realisation that their cattle have become affected by ticks. The tiny critters, while almost impossible to eradicate from Australian pastures, can decimate herds, at worst, and cause sickness to the domestic animals and a headache to their owners who have to find solutions. A trip to the agricultural supplier invariably results in a container of failsafe (or so they say) chemical compound which has to be sprayed on or poured on and most purchasers are horrified when reading the small print that would have them don the latest in expensive protective apparel.

Jo Cutlack of Gympie seems to have come up with a solution to both problems, namely the fear of chemical use and its inherent dangers, as well as the tick affliction.

Although she is not sure how her 'cure' works, she is willing to swear by the positive effect of a simple compound, a rock fertiliser (Alroc No 1 mix) which is normally sold as a soil conditioner for 'tired' paddocks.

Consisting of basalt, dolomite, bentonite, rock phosphate and rock potash, the No 1 mix has actually been praised for many years for restoring ground to enable it to grow healthy plants with high degrees of insect and grub resistance. It is also said to reduce the cost of watering and extend the shelflife of fruit grown on the soil thus rejuvenated.

Some years ago Jo received a phone call from her son who pleaded with her to agist two head of cattle, saying they would not last the winter on his barren property. After getting them to her property in a horsefloat, Jo noticed they had the dreaded tick fever. Her son had also made her aware of a news clipping of a reported cure for ticks with the rock fertiliser. She wasted no time in obtaining some and treating the animals with it.

They recovered and are now a picture of health and respond to the kindness

dished out by Jo. She hand-feeds them with special treats every day and every day they plod to the paddock next to the house to greet their owner.

Meanwhile, Jo has gone further with the rock fertiliser. She puts it into the birdbath drinking water, the cat's drink, and liberally into the bathtub that serves as the watering point for the cattle. The

animals are now highly tick resistant and the particular mix she orders in has extra quantities of potash which, apparently, acts as an organic catalyst.

If any reader has questions as to quantities needed for each feed and the amount of molasses blended into the mix to make it a highly palatable offering, Jo can be contacted on 07-5486-6225.



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# MESCLUN SALAD DAYS

by John Holland, Flinders, Vic.

Ahh! The salad days of summer. How I look forward to munching on a fresh-picked summer salad after suffering the blandness of slow growing winter lettuces. Mesclun salads are a daily part of our summer diet, and can be found as meal companions on just about every cafe and restaurant menu these days – for good reason. The simple, boring, green salad that may have accompanied a similar meal a few years ago just did not offer the same interest to either the eye or the palate. Today, salad mixes are generally provided to cafes ready prepared by specialist growers. This is a good system for the business owner, but there are two drawbacks for the end customer (you and me). Firstly, the salads are not grown organically, and secondly, they may have been in the fridge for a week or so. Also, for those that cannot make it easily to these places a good mesclun salad might seem a bit of a mystery.

The way around these problems is to grow your own. In spite of the fact that a good mesclun might contain a dozen salad leaves, it isn't as difficult as it first appears, as several seed suppliers offer mixed seed packets. Once a salad garden is established it is easy to maintain it for most of the year in cool parts of the country with successive sowings on the same ground. The quality of a mesclun freshly picked minutes before the eating is far superior to that of those from a commercial eatery. The salad leaves are full of vitality, crisp to the bite and distinctive to the taste.

## ESTABLISHING A SALAD GARDEN

Each spring I set aside a vegetable garden bed of eight square metres for my salad garden. This will easily feed our family of two adults and two children with a salad a day over the warmer months with plenty left for visitors and the chooks. With the exception of basil, which requires much less water, all my salad leaves are grown there for the year.

Preparation of the bed is important, as salad leaves need to be grown quickly for best results, and the season is long. I plant a green manure crop of peas in the

late winter. Fast growing salad vegetables need plenty of nitrogen and digging in a legume crop like this a couple of weeks prior to planting provides that, as well as improving the drainage and structure of the soil. While the green manure crop is growing I get my first batch of seedlings underway in a mini-propagator. Lettuces are one of the easiest garden vegetables to grow from seed, so if you haven't tried producing your own seedlings this is a good crop to start with. One of the tricks of growing a salad garden is getting the succession planning right, and I have had to resort to buying established seedlings on plenty of occasions when I mistimed it. Starting new seeds every three to four weeks in spring and two to three weeks in summer will mean that you have plenty of fresh young seedlings for replacing ageing plants. By dividing the garden into thirds you have three stages of growth going at once with the lettuces, which are the basic ingredient of a mesclun, ensuring an uninterrupted supply.

The green manure crop will be ready when a lush cover of sappy plants overtakes the garden bed. With a spade, chop the tops up into small bits, sprinkle plenty of blood and bone or well aged manure on the top and dig in. In a couple of weeks the green manure crop will be incorporated into the soil and the garden bed will be bursting to grow anything!

Lettuces need plenty of water, so set up a sprinkler system at the start of summer to ensure that it is easy to water. If the soil dries out these shallow-rooted plants develop a bitter flavour and start to go to seed early. I use ten millimetre poly pipe with 180 degree microsprays attached to one side of the bed, but you might need to experiment to find the best system for you. If you have a limited water supply I describe a growing technique below which doesn't demand as much water.

## SALAD INGREDIENTS

The ingredients of a mesclun salad are limited only by your imagination, or more likely by what you have planted in

the garden. The only requirements are that there is plenty of variety in colour, shape and texture, and that the salad leaves are fresh and young. Lettuce makes up the bulk of the required ingredients, but there are many other salad leaves which add interesting flavours and shapes to the dish when combined with the crunch of radish and fresh cucumber.

## LETTUCE

Lettuce is the core ingredient of mesclun salad. Just which lettuce varieties you choose is finally of personal preference, but loose leaf types from which you can pick several leaves at a time, leaving the rest of the plant to continue to grow, are the best for the purpose. It is an important goal when creating a good mesclun salad to choose a combination of lettuce leaf shape and colour. As one lettuce leaf tastes much the same as another, this is purely for the aesthetic pleasure of the eye. It is probably the real reason that mesclun salads are now so popular, not only are they good for you, they look great too.

Several seed companies offer packets of lettuce seed which are described as mesclun mix. They all contain several varieties of lettuce which provide the basis for a good mesclun. However, they supply different varieties, so it is a good idea to try each one out for yourself. If you know already which lettuces are your favourites, then you are streets ahead and can find the supplier that best meets your needs.

A word of warning: Some suppliers include such things as chervil and mustard in their mixes. These are great salad plants, but it is best to germinate the seed for these separately, as they have different requirements. Stick to lettuce-only mixes and grow these extras independently. There are so many seeds in any one packet, and lettuce is so easy to germinate, that I only use one a year. To these I add other preferred varieties from various sources. This makes for very cost effective gardening.

Some of the varieties you might consider are Red Oak Leaf, Green Oak Leaf,



Royal Oak Leaf, Buttercrunch, Green Mignonette, Red Sails, Red Coral, Australian Yellow Leaf, Red Velvet, Red and Green Cos. Some lettuce varieties, such as Cos, are better suited to cooler weather, and these should form the basis of the salad in early spring and late autumn for cool climate areas.

## LETTUCE GROWING TECHNIQUES

I have tried four main ways to grow lettuces for mesclun salad, all successful, but with different advantages and disadvantages.

### Grow Fully Developed Lettuces

With this method each individual lettuce is planted. They are then allowed to grow to full size before you start to pick leaves from the outside of the plant. If grown fast enough most of these leaves will be fine for a salad, if a little large and requiring tearing at the preparation stage. Similarly, if the central leaves are removed the plant will regrow them in time, providing a couple more pickings. The advantages of this technique are that fewer successive plantings are needed through a season and that the individual plants grow relatively deep root systems and can be mulched for water conservation, an important consideration for those on tank supplies. The disadvantages are that if the outer leaves are used they are not of the first quality as are younger leaves, and if the hearts are taken they take quite a long time to regrow.

### The Lettuce Carpet

This involves either direct seeding a well prepared bed with plenty of seed and not thinning out the resultant close germination, or planting seedlings extremely close to one another - 40 to 50 millimetres. As the plants grow they smother the soil with growth and leave little chance for weed germination. To



A bed of mesclun lettuce illustrating the fully developed technique; chives shown front right.

harvest simply snip the plants about 30 millimetres from the base as required and they will regrow. The advantage is that young leaves are harvested and production is high from a small area. Disadvantages are that it is difficult to be selective about which varieties to pick in a mixed bed, snails and slugs find it a paradise on earth and are impossible to find in the dense growth, regrowth is slow and uneven, and some varieties of the 'carpet' tend to out-compete their companions.

### Cut and Come Again

Individual plants are planted out spaced at 100 to 150 millimetres. As the plants reach small-leaf stage they are snipped off about 30 millimetres from the base. The lettuce then regrows new leaves. This can be done several times until they start to produce bitter tasting leaves,

when they are replaced. This system is used by commercial growers of mesclun mixes. The advantages are that the pick is of young leaves right-sized for the salad bowl and easy selection of preferred varieties for that day. As regrowth is relatively slow, however, it requires a large amount of space to get adequate leaf production and snails and slugs play havoc with the regrowth. For these reasons, I don't believe it is as satisfactory as my preferred method, close planting, when used in the home garden.

### Close Planting

As above, individual seedlings are planted out 100 to 150 millimetres apart and grown to small-to-medium-leaf stage. In contrast, however the outer leaves only are harvested as needed, ensuring some well developed leaves are left in order for the plant to continue to grow strongly. Regrowth continues from the centre of the plant quickly, without

the delay experienced with the cut-and-come-again method. The harvested leaves at this size are ideal for the salad bowl. For home table production this is the best method I have found for producing copious quantities of quality leaves.

When the first batch of lettuce is established, start seeds for the next batch. These will then be planted out while the first batch are in full production, and will be well established when the first batch starts to taste a little bitter, and so on over the season. This production method rotates the picking lettuces over the chosen garden bed. When planting seedlings into an area that has already grown a batch, just toss a handful of compost into the planting hole and the new seedlings won't look back. Use a liquid manure to keep the developing plants growing quickly.



## OTHER SALAD LEAVES FOR THE MESCLUN

### Endive

This is a useful leaf, very similar to lettuce, and grows well over cooler days. Most common are the heavily serrated leaf types which add visually to the mix, as well as contributing a not unpleasant bitter flavour.

### Coriander

This is a great addition to the salad bowl. It will grow easily in the salad garden. The fresh leaves have a piquant flavour that some find an acquired taste and for this reason you won't find it in a commercial mix. I love it and always try and include a few sprigs in my salads – too much will easily overpower all other flavours. It grows well in cool weather but has a tendency to bolt in the heat. I have discovered that it is easy to prevent this by keeping it well cut, with only a few low leaves keeping the plant going. In this way the production of ferny foliage that heralds bolting is kept in check and picking can be extended over the months of summer. As each plant only produces a few springs by this technique I plant a long, closely sown row for a continuous supply over this period.

### Chervil

Another great leaf that you won't find in a commercial mix as it wilts much more quickly than lettuce. It has a delicate aniseed flavour well suited to the mesclun salad. As with coriander, not too much. Chervil grows easily in spring and autumn and is a prolific self-seeder. I intend to try to grow it in some shade over next summer to see if I can maintain a supply in the hottest part of the year.

### Rocket

Also known as roquett or arugula, it has a great peppery flavour and has become very popular in recent years. Use generously in a mesclun. It grows easily all year round. As it tends to bolt in summer, and as the young leaves are best in any case, a similar cropping technique to coriander can be employed to ensure a long season.

### Parsley

An easily grown herb, a few leaves are quite at home in a salad. Both curly and Italian flat leaf types add interest to the dish.

### Radicchio

This is a red chickory, much loved by Italian gardeners. Try Red Triviso. It is easily grown and has a long picking sea-

son, being a perennial. It has a useful bitter flavour and wonderful deep red colour in its second year.

### Basil

A herb with an aniseed flavour that is quite distinct from that of chervil, I like to use a few leaves of the opal basil occasionally. It has a deep purple colour that really catches the eye and most people really love the flavour. It is easily grown, needs hot weather but likes some shade in the heat of the summer, so I plant it with the tomatoes where it is traditionally the companion anyway.

### Mizuna

A brassica which has finely dissected leaves and grows quickly. It has a place in salads year-round but really comes into its own in the cooler months when it continues to grow well.

### Others

Leaves you might want to try include French sorrel, baby beetroot leaves, chives, tatsu, purslane, mustard greens (try Katie's lettuce) and cress.

## ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS TO GROW

Radish is easy and quick to grow and makes a fine crunchy ingredient in a salad. Cucumber is an old favourite that I nearly always include and sun-dried tomatoes bring condensed sunshine to the plate. When I use tomatoes in a mesclun, I always use sun-dried ones, as fresh tomato adds too much bulk. Save them for a wonderful tomato and basil salad on the side. I never use onions, as the flavour of even mild onions does not complement a good mesclun.

## PUTTING IT TOGETHER

The only other ingredients that you will need are olive oil (extra virgin – this salad needs a good quality oil) and some fetta cheese.

The key to a good salad is freshness. Pick your leaves just before you need them, unless the weather is forecast to be very hot, in which case pick and clean the leaves first thing in the morning, storing wrapped in a tea towel inside a plastic bag in the fridge until needed later in the day. Wash all the leaves well. Tear any larger leaves and dry in a salad spinner, or in a clean tea towel swung around and around rapidly (outside) to separate the water from the leaves. If the leaves stay wet the oil will be repelled and just end up at the bottom of the bowl. Using your largest bowl, add the

leaf ingredients but leave plenty of room for mixing. This may just be the incentive to finally buy a really large salad bowl! Crumble on the fetta if you are using it and add any other ingredients. Finally add olive oil – not too little, not too much – experience is the teacher, and gently mix. Serve and watch in wonder as everyone starts to dig in for more and more salad. A good mesclun salad truly is a revelation.



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# RECYCLING RUNS RIOT

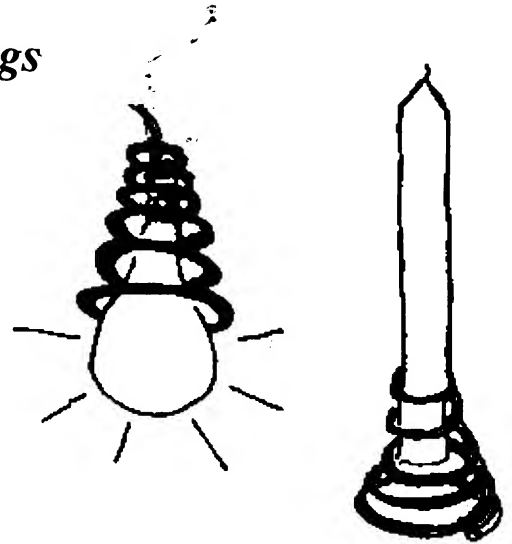
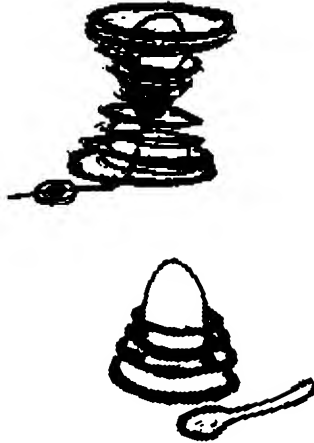
by Roberino, Arrawarra Beach, NSW.

## Recycled Bedsprings

At this exact moment I think there must be about eleven million bedsprings lying idle. Every rubbish tip I've ever seen is littered with these miracles of modern living, designed to perform year in, year out under the most appalling conditions of heat, weight and physical reversals you could ever imagine. They are zinc plated, presumably against moisture, so you can see the manufacturers have done some pretty deep research. It's a bit sad that performing so well for so many years and witnessing so many dramas they are abandoned to the loneliness of the bleak rubbish tips and the quiet country track dumps. Maybe they need a good rest.

We can change all that and give them a new home and a new purpose. Now right from the start you must clean them thoroughly, with a strong disinfectant and boil them. I mean, you don't know where they've been, do you? After that you can have them chromed, paint them in fluorescent colours, there is no limit.

How to use these magical shapes? Candle holders, but not for tall candles unless you weight the base with



something heavy. Most house fires (and deaths) are from candles and cigarettes remember. Nail/hang the large end of a spring from the wall and they become handy hold-alls in the office, kitchen or workshop/craft/ sewing room.

Two joined together make a toast/bread rack for the dining table. Cover with material and put on a painted golf ball and it's a doll/puppet. There are different shapes and sizes so it's possible to come up with some amazing

inventions. No arts/crafts room should be without them, and they are great for explaining to kids how a vortex works in a tornado, bath drain, or on a the wingtips of aeroplanes and racing cars.

Don't forget the old homemade Jack-in the box, or a toy spider which jumps out of an innocent package. Little boys will be in hysterics over that one. Oh well, boys will be boys, so girls take notice. I don't see how this truism can be rewritten in a less sexist way (sorry).

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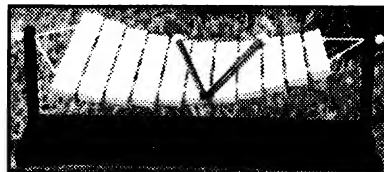
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## ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

We hope you enjoy this feature introducing new products relevant to readers' lifestyles and interests.



### COMPOST WORM CAST SEPARATOR

Easy Rota is a new concept in machinery for separating worms and their cast. Most machines aim to remove the worms and leave the cast behind – Easy Rota does it the other way around. Worms are gently collected up by specially angled pins within a drum structure and as it rotates the cast exits the drum worm free. Manufactured by The Vital Earth Company, Easy Rotas have been designed to provide total separation and efficient, high throughput. Another feature distinguishing this machinery from others is that stress on the worms is apparently negligible because the worms are kept in the darkness of the drum. Two models are available: Easy Rota 1000 is a hand-operated unit capable of a feed rate of cast of a continuous 3 to 5 kg per minute. This is ideal for the small worm farmer, gardeners and schools and it costs around \$1600. The Easy Rota 2000 is a heavy duty commercial machine suitable for larger industries. It is capable of a feed rate of cast of a continuous 10 to 15 kg per minute and the cost is around \$5000.

**Contact: Darryl Jones, The Vital Earth Company, PO Box 3, Lemon Tree Passage, 2319. Ph: 02-4982-6080. Fax: 02-4982-6278.**

### INNOVATIVE CERAMIC WATERING SYSTEM

Wetpot Industries have developed a new and unique irrigation system which is designed to be water-efficient, cost-effective and simple to operate. It provides a solution to many irrigation-related problems and can be employed in many difficult situations. Wetpot delivers water below the soil surface via seepage through specially designed ball-shaped ceramic bottles. Unlike other watering systems, Wetpot supplies water direct to the roots. They can be positioned to deliver water where it is specifically needed, including pots, planter boxes and raised beds. The system can be connected to mains water supply if desired or you can simply set up anywhere using a water reservoir positioned higher than the level of the garden. Bottles are available from Wetpot for this purpose. Wetpot operates as a stand-alone system, independent of water pressure or electricity supply. There are no timers or manual turning of taps. Between periodic refillings of the reservoir, the system can be entirely neglected. The Wetpot system is suitable for permaculture and community gardens, remote areas, arid areas, weekenders, balconies and pots.

**Contact: Peter Wakeling, PO Box 621, Annerley 4103. Ph: 07-3848-6595.**

### MORE MEANINGFUL CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Increase the number of people to whom you give joy at Christmas, without spending more money! By buying your gifts from the Community Aid Abroad and Amnesty International catalogues you are giving to family & friends *and*

people facing poverty and social injustices. Both of these catalogues offer a great range of beautiful and interesting items to suit all budgets. And enjoy the convenience of mail order shopping – think of all that energy you'll save.

**Contact for a free catalogue: Amnesty International, Private Bag 23, Broadway 2007. Ph: 1300-78 78 30. Fax: 02-9217-7677.**

**Community Aid Abroad, PO Box 184, Kilkenny 5009.**

**Ph: 1800 088 455. Fax: 08-8341-2958.**

Another way to boost your giving power is by being generous to the environment in your choice of gifts.

**Contact The Wilderness Society for their product catalogue at: PO Box 1119, Brunswick MDC, Vic 3056. Ph: 1800-628-596. Fax: 03-9386-9577. Or obtain the Alternatives catalogue from PO Box 170, Park Orchards, 3114. Ph: 1800-032-406. Fax: 03-9879-9774.**

### BIRD PROTECTION PRODUCTS

Here are two novel ideas from an Australian inventor for people concerned about the toll cats are taking on wild native birds, reptiles and mammals. These simple products can be used to help prevent nesting sites from destruction and create safe watering, resting and feeding sites for bird colonies. *The Bird Protector* has been designed for conservation-minded cat lovers to deter cats from getting up trees. It has numerous flexible plastic 'fronds' that radiate from a base strip and so deter cats. It comes in strip lengths so it can be adapted to all tree diameters – cut it to size and nail to tree. *The Clip-On Bird Bath* allows bird lovers the opportunity to provide a safe feeding and watering receptacle for birds. It is a 'spigot' collar apparatus with a number of plastic bowls, that can be suspended securely on posts, poles and trees. These bath bowls can be easily removed from the spigot collar for cleaning.

**Contact: Mathew Norton, 15 Balonne St, Runcorn 4113.**

### BATHROOM ORGANISER

This is a product that would be especially useful if you buy soap, shampoo, conditioner and such like in bulk. Called the INdispenser, this is a three-chamber container that attaches to your bathroom wall. You can fill the dispenser with any three liquid products and so simplify storage and reduce spillage and wastage. It is made of durable ABS plastic and can be easily installed onto tiles or plastic wall surfaces. Either attach with double-sided tape or fix a permanent mount by drilling holes and attaching the backplate to the wall with the screws provided. Recommended retail price is approximately \$26.95 and INdispenser is available from hardware and plumbing outlets.

**Contact: Handi Home Supplies, 50 Longview Crt, Thomastown 3074. Ph: 03-9466-1611.**

### PLANT HARDINESS POSTER

The Diggers Club commissioned the Bureau of Meteorology to produce heat and cold zone maps for Australia. These maps enable plant hardiness to be assessed (hardiness is a plant's ability to survive the environmental conditions of a particular location). Diggers have now produced the maps in the form of a wall chart. The chart also contains a list of the heat and cold ranges of selected plants (180 perennials, bulbs, shrubs and trees) so that they can be matched to the fourteen heat and eight cold zones across Australia. Since heat stress is the major cause of plant failure in Australia, the poster gives more emphasis to the heat zones than the cold ones. The wall chart is poster sized and laminated. It is available by mail order for \$18 incl p&p (\$10 if you are a Diggers Club member).

**Contact: The Digger's Club, 105 La Trobe Parade, Dromana 3936. Ph: 03-5987-1877.**



## AN OUTBACK CHRISTMAS

by Karen Long, Isisford, QLD.

Christmas time in the outback brings heat, humidity, flies and sandflies. It occurs at the hottest time of the year for us, when the heat build-up causes spectacular electrical storms with heavy downpours and the usual power outages.

Christmas here is a low key affair. There are no shops festooned with decorations and playing Christmas carols, as there are simply no shops. We usually travel to Longreach or Blackall to do some Christmas shopping, but otherwise we mail order or make all gifts. Gift preparations and purchases commence months in advance so that all gifts can be posted off to relatives and friends to arrive before Christmas Day. The early preparation allows for a great deal of thought to go into the gift selection process.

To bring some of the Christmas festivities to town for the children, Yaraka holds a Christmas tree function two weeks beforehand. Santa arrives on the back of a utility at the hall where a gidea tree has been decorated as a Christmas tree. He hands out presents for all the children and then everyone shares a meal. The children really enjoy the night and it is an opportunity for the community to get together and share in the Christmas spirit. Santa only stays for a short time. In 40° C heat, he would expire if we didn't get him out of his Santa suit fairly quickly!

Our Christmas preparations really get into gear when we erect the Christmas tree on December 1st and the children put up their Advent calendars. As parcels arrive in the mail in the weeks leading up to Christmas, they are placed under the tree. By Christmas Eve the area around the tree is packed with gifts. Christmas cards are exchanged this month with newsy letters attached, as this is often the only contact with distant friends each year.

On the night before Christmas the children put a pillowcase each on the end of their beds in anticipation of a gift. They also put a slice of cake for Santa on the table and a note saying there is a beer in the fridge for him. Next morning is heralded by a rumble in the bedroom as the



Above: Jade Long receiving a present from Santa under the decorated gidea tree at Yaraka.  
Below: Our swimming hole. Picture us floating blissfully on Christmas afternoon.



children open their pillowcases and compare gifts left by 'Santa'. After breakfast, everyone takes a position in the lounge room where the gifts from under the tree are opened. We always keep a list of who gives what to whom, and thank you letters are written afterwards.

As we are distant from relatives at this time of year, we ring them to wish them a Merry Christmas. As each of our families usually gathers at one person's place for Christmas lunch, these phone calls can be rather long once everyone has had a small chat to everyone else.

Lunch is always a cold affair in our house. All cooking is done the day before to provide a hassle-free day for the cook. Some people on other properties still have a hot roast meal for lunch, as is traditional in their family. We still have the roast chicken, ham and plum pudding, but team them with salads and brandy custard in the hot weather.

After a rest in the heat of the afternoon, everyone heads for the water-hole to have a swim. As the waterhole is quite deep, everyone has their own board, tyre tube or boat to lie on and drift up and down in the cool of the afternoon. Parrots and galahs come to watch us with curiosity while crauchies nibble our toes. Kangaroos and sheep watch us with one eye while drinking, too hot and thirsty to really worry about us.

So this is how we spend our Christmas in the outback, a quiet family day enjoyed by everyone.

#### CHRISTMAS TREATS FOR GARDENS

We are often so busy over the festive holiday season, and many of us are away from home for periods of time, that our gardens can quickly wilt in the heat and subsequently take weeks to recover. To minimise the damage take these simple measures:

- Sprinkle worm castings around garden beds in early December and water them in well.
- Spread mulch generously everywhere. It's best to apply damp mulch to damp soil.
- A seaweed spray in early and another in mid December will give plants added vigour to cope with heat stress.
- From early December reduce the frequency of watering to once or twice a week and water deeply.
- An automatic watering system can be a good investment if you're going to be away for a lengthy period. Drippers and well spaced microsprays are preferable to water-wasting sprinklers.



We put up our tree on December 1st and by Christmas Eve the floor beneath is piled with gifts from distant family and friends.

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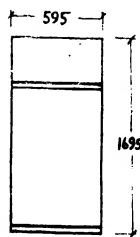
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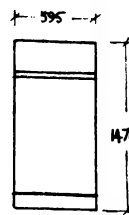
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# DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Megg Miller.

Life's little catastrophes are wont to turn up at the least opportune times. Just recently I was rushing around, getting ready to set off for a much anticipated day at the Annual Seed Savers Gathering when the most extraordinary incident occurred. Suddenly the house was filled with the sound of falling objects and smashing glass. I was rooted to the spot, stunned. What was happening and where? The kitchen? I don't recall pushing the door open and entering, but do remember being struck on the head by a flying object. When I gingerly opened my eyes, I encountered the most amazing scene. The roof-high set of shelves had collapsed. Homemade tomato paste was splattered all over the wall, the floor was a mass of broken bottles and their contents, everything from gin and Midori to sesame seeds, brown rice, raw sugar, vitamin pills and mixed herbs. A jar of pickled eggs had disgorged its contents under the kitchen table. Worse still, the dried mess and broken glass were fast being glued together with congealing jam and chutney. Both the mess and devastation were beyond description.

Where to start first? I was very shocked and could feel the beginning of a headache where my head had been stuck. I was also late for the day's activities. All there was time to do was scrape tomato paste off the fabric front of the CD speaker. Then I just walked out and away.

When I arrived at Hurstbridge an hour or so later with my crate of fowls, the last thing I felt capable of was fulfilling the obligation of being a speaker. Some TLC from Jude and Michel Fanton and their helpful associates soon saw a coffee in my hand and the birds in the shade of a tree. By lunchtime I was talking turkey, or something avian, and recovering from the ordeal. The talk went well and I actually enjoyed the day.

The mess was awaiting my return, but the stimulating discussion and charming company had buoyed me up to tackle the unappealing cleanup. Although I still felt troubled by the enormity of what I'd witnessed, its significance in the great scheme of life had settled realistically. What I'd lost were, after all, only acquisitions.

I may have continued feeling sad and sorry for myself except for a remark made

by an old acquaintance at the gathering. He mentioned he was returning home to an unenviable situation. Just before the weekend his partner had fatally injured a youngster who had ridden out in front of the car without looking and, whilst the driver was absolved of any responsibility, they would need a lot of support to recover from this tragic event. What price my broken trinkets compared to the grief a child's momentary unawareness would bring? The lives of two families would be irrevocably changed.

I do wonder, however, why it is that objects of sentimental or monetary value are always the first to break while the cheap and nasty things escape destruction with nary a chip. I'm now faced with selecting a new structure to hold the surviving bits and pieces. I've learnt one lesson from the experience – put the junky stuff up high and the treasures at a lower level where they have more chance of surviving the unexpected. However, I seem to recall the spirits collection and array of animal shaped tureens were put out of reach to escape the curious fingers of visiting littlies. A little problem to solve here, it seems...

I'm hoping to end up with a clean and well organised kitchen as a result of this and a previous drama. Some weeks back the fridge threw a turn and needed professional attention. It had to be turned off and thoroughly cleaned out. I was ruthless and tossed away the collection of cheese ends, the butter papers and jars of remnant sun-dried tomatoes, jam or forgotten mayonnaise. It's a pleasure to open the fridge now clean shelves greet me and hold just a few bits and pieces. The pig gained kilos as a result of the big cleanout, as everything from the freezer had to go. There won't be a need to select a treat for Piggy at Christmas, she has just scoffed down enough good tucker to feed a family for a week. At least it was well appreciated.

Whenever I'm out and about and come across a local market I stop in search of useful bargains, especially shrubs and plants for the garden. I visited one on the edge of the city back in August and amongst the eclectic mix of stalls was a display of birds and pets for sale. It was a cold windy day and the livestock looked miserable, but a cage of lively lit-

tle birds caught my eye. They were Japanese quail, a breed I'd hankered after for several years because of their lovely little spotted eggs. In the past when Suni kept them we had been inundated with eggs, and whilst we had just thrown them away I now fancied hard-boiled quail eggs in my Caesar salad. I purchased two of the inhabitants of the cage, requesting females, and set off home with my new companions. They produced half a dozen eggs straight away, but output has been pathetic since then. Every now and then I'll find a few eggs in their feed bowl or scattered around the shed, but there has been no sign of the great production of yesteryear. I ask, 'where are my eggs?', whenever I refill feed and water, but there is never any answer. They are actually very sweet little birds, and quietly potter around the floor of the pigeon aviary, the other occupants being two geriatric Magpie pigeons.

So where are the eggs? Japs are renowned for good production. They are hard to distinguish in the wood shavings used as litter and maybe a few are lying unfound. I think I'll be lucky to find sufficient to accompany Caesar salad for one, let alone contemplate making gift jars of pickled quail eggs. At least they are endearing little creatures with lovely plumage markings. The big plus is that they require so much less feed and attention than other feathered friends wandering around.

Of course the poultry can only roam safely because of the diligence of Maria the Maremma. I'm eternally grateful for her assistance, especially during spring when scatty geese and turkeys set up nests in the most dangerous places. Foxes have been bad everywhere these last few months, judging by the phone calls I've received, but the losses here have been minimal. The poor dog has a big job of a night patrolling the perimeter of this place together with a few acres of the neighbours, she likes to look after. If a bird sets in an out of way place, perhaps right up the paddock, or even over the road, and a few do, they are pushing their luck. They stand a greater chance of survival if they steal a nest in the midst of the farmlet. I hear Maria barking furiously in specific areas and assume she is driving back a hopeful fox; some nights the barking going on for hours on end.

She was barking today when I was on the phone and the caller enquired about the noise in the background. 'It's the dog,' I said. 'She's under the old office and is too tired to get up and investigate so she's barking in bed.' It must have been a demanding night. She's worked here for eight years now and the losses to foxes during this period have been few. She's aggressive to anything that threatens the birds, but if they don't react or she doesn't think there is danger, then it's back to dozing. Snakes are not considered a problem, in fact I've seen her almost walk on one without appearing to notice. Being aware of her attitude, it shouldn't have been a surprise when I noticed a bunny bouncing past her recently.

The rabbit ran in under the front gate and past her as I drove in one evening. Since then I've seen several in the driveway as well as some fluffy tails disappearing into the grass towards the back of the property. 'What about the dog,' a neighbour boomed over the motor of his ute. 'Surely she gets onto them.' 'Well no,' I said with embarrassment. 'She's not your ordinary farm dog.' Clearly the rabbits present no danger to her flock so why warn them off? They will have to be tackled, but in the meantime I hope word doesn't get around that this is a *Lagomorpha* refuge with a four-footed protector – the place could be overrun.

Now that I drive to work, life has changed drastically. Until the commencement of daylight saving, the final hour of feeding and locking up was by torchlight. For the first time ever I'm grateful for the longer evenings. But having to arise early is murder. Some people are good in the morning, others at night, and I'm afraid I'm one of the latter. Getting out of bed is still difficult and left to the last possible minute. Then I have to run to get all the

jobs done. The locals must think I've taken up cross-country training; they see me running to and fro as they drive past, my cap askew and feed spilling out of the buckets. If nothing else, I'm getting fitter.

Readjusting the daily routines may help, but essentially it's time to reduce numbers. I've been saying I'll do it for years, and now I have to. There is never any trouble getting rid of stock, it's a matter of finding the time to catch them and get them off to their new owners. Having made this decision it is ironic the incubator has suddenly stabilised and is successfully hatching young. Not a lot, as most of the spring eggs were lost through overheating, but just enough to enable several of the rare breeds to continue plus the usual cheery little turkeys and guinea hatchlings. Life would be very dull without a few dozen young ones to rear, even if it means getting out of bed earlier.

Christmas, although close, has rated little thought. Godchild Bronwyn and parents have booked in for a post-Christmas stay and if we are really lucky her godfather Ken will manage a visit as well. There hasn't been time to talk with my adopted godchildren and learn of their plans, with the exception of Gareth who has booked a turkey for the day. Suni has warned me her pecuniary position is poor, and not to expect too much. It seemed best not to suggest her pennilessness was a direct result of the holiday she is planning in late January.

A simple Christmas will suit me well. Books and choccies, or choccies and books. You couldn't find more satisfying presents. A meal with my nearest and dearest, a phone call to the godchildren and in-laws, and maybe a quick visit to one or two friends, that's what I call a really special day. And on Boxing Day, out come the chocolates and books. Bliss!

# PENPALS

My name is Sarah McDougall and I am 10. I live in Tasmania. I go to school and have a dog and a computer.

**Sarah,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

I am searching for a penpal, aged between 13 and 17, either gender. My name is Amata; my interests include reading, writing, music and just plain bludging, given the appropriate situation. Anybody who shares my hobbies/interests, or even if you don't . . . please write.

**Amata,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

My name is Julia, and I'm 39 years old, separated, with two girls (5 and 21 months) and one due March/April '99. My interests include a self-reliant lifestyle, heavy horses, riding and breeding horses, swimming, gardening, herbs, medieval history and life. Learning to sew and knit! Love to hear from anyone and all letters replied to.

**Julia Forsyth,**

**7 O'Rourke Place, OTALI 6471 NZ.**

Hello, my name is Coral, I am 51. My hobbies are writing to penpals, gardening, crafts, collecting fridge magnets, bushwalking, fossicking, fishing and photography. Willing to write to anyone, any age.

**Coral,**

**PO Box 579, NARRABRI 2390.**

I'd like to correspond with anybody who's into finding pleasure in the simpler things of life. I'm a 33 year old mum of 3 boys aged 12, 13 & 14 and enjoy fishing, reading and dreaming about everything that I'm going to do in the future, as long as it involves travelling.

**Sandy Schadel,**

**53 Barbaralla Dve, SPRINGWOOD 4127.**

I am a 31 year old female. My interests include playing classical guitar, dancing and acting in amateur theatre, reading, calligraphy, bushwalking, watching movies and listening to music. Also I love the ocean and walking along the beach. If you are between 25 and 50 years of age, I would love to hear from you.

**Leouen Russell,**

**PO Box 12587, A'Beckett St PO, MELBOURNE 8006.**

My name is Jacqui and I'm seven. I would like penpals aged 6-8 years, boy or girl. My hobbies are horse riding and Brownies. I like art and craft. I will answer all letters.

**Jacqui,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi! My name is Melanie and I'm nine years old. I collect stamps, play the violin, I'm a Brownie Guide and I play netball. I enjoy art, singing, reading and writing. I'd love to write to a girl penpal aged 8-11 years. I will answer all letter.

**Melanie,**

**C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**



*"Happiest is he who hath the power to gather wisdom from a flower"*

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email: [juanostik@hotmail.com](mailto:juanostik@hotmail.com)

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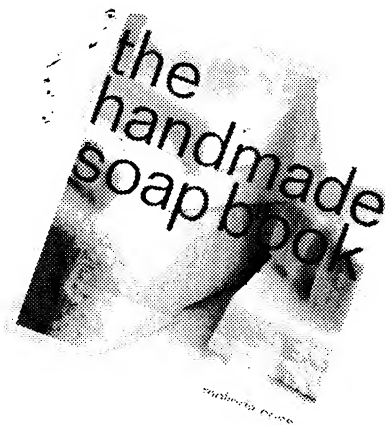
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## ★ FEATURE TITLE ★

### THE HANDMADE SOAP BOOK – Melinda Cross.

The perfect book for all of those people who make or wish to make delicious handmade soaps. This luscious book is filled with all the information and recipes you could ever want and inspiring colourful photos appear throughout. The information about the various ingredients and procedures involved with natural soap making is presented clearly and comprehensively. The recipes given do

not require specialist equipment or difficult to obtain ingredients. Mostly it's the sumptuous photographs that make this book special. Think about it as a Christmas gift or buy the book for yourself and justify it by making up some of the recipes and giving soaps as presents. **H/b, 80pp, New Holland Publishers Pty Ltd, Locked Bag 516 Frenchs Forest, 1640. Ph: 02-9975-6799. RRP \$34.95.**



### COB – Ron Edwards Building In Earth

Think of the charm of typical Devon cottages – cob is the term for them and though they originated in Devon they can be found elsewhere. The author asserts that while cob is the oldest and easiest method of earth building, it is a building form that has been almost forgotten. This book may well help revive the technique. It contains detailed explanations, instructions and illustrations. Written by a consultant in earth building methods, this book should interest anyone considering building in earth.

**P/b, 100pp, The Rams Skull Press, 12 Fairyland Rd, Kuranda 4872.. Ph: 07-4093-7474. RRP \$18 incl p& p.**

### YOUR CHINESE HOROSCOPE 1999 – Neil Somerville What The Year Of The Rabbit Holds In Store For You.

Out with the year of the Tiger and in with the year of the Rabbit. In this book the general personalities of people born under each of the twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac are described briefly as are the five different types within each sign. The bulk of the book though outlines the prospects for people of each sign in 1999. The general prospects depicted for each sign are tempered with the author's reminder that 'at all times you are the master of your own destiny'. This is the twelfth year of publication of this book so it is obviously popular.

**P/b, 347pp, Thorsons/Harper Collins, PO Box 321, Pymble 2073. Ph:02-9952-5000. RRP \$16.95.**

### THE GARDEN LOVER'S GUIDE TO AUSTRALIA 400 Special Gardens To Visit – Holly Kerr Forsyth

This is an Australia-wide guide to interesting and beautiful gardens open to the public, a revised edition containing over eighty new entries. The gardens include private country and city gardens, Botanic gardens and historic house gardens. All information to help you is provided: addresses, entry times, costs, contact numbers and places to stay. Historical and background information and descriptions of botanical features of each garden are described by the author who is a horticulturalist. The book also includes an index of plants and an index of gardens and maps. A perfect resource for travelling garden lovers!

**P/b, 200pp, Random House Australia, 1st floor, 20 Alfred Street, Milson's Point 2061. Ph:02-9954-9966. RRP \$24.95.**

### FRENCH TRAPUNTO Designs & Techniques

#### FRENCH TRAPUNTO Small Gifts – Solange Kergreis

Trapunto is an elaborately decorative white quilted embroidery which

developed in southern France during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Historically, trapunto pieces were reserved for special occasions (weddings, baptisms etc). In these books, detailed patterns, instructions and photographs will enable readers to make a variety of items. Crafty people looking for something different will love this exquisite technique.

**P/b, 46pp, Kangaroo Press, Simon & Schuster, PO Box 507, East Roseville 2069. Ph:02-9415-9924. RRP \$14.95 each.**

### GROWING UNCOMMON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN AUSTRALIA – Keith Smith

Liven up your food production by growing some of the fruits and vegies suggested in this guide. The entries are categorised by country of origin – Africa, Americas, Asia, Australia, Europe, Western Asia. They are then grouped under Grains, Greens, Fruits, Yams, Brassicas, Legumes, Roots & Tubers. Illustrations accompany each plant entry. The book includes a comprehensive directory of seed and plant suppliers.

**P/b, 164pp, New Holland Publishers, 14 Aquatic Dr, Frenchs Forest 2086. Ph:02-9975-6799. RRP \$ 19.95.**

### PAIN-FREE LIVING – Anne Rennie A Cookbook For Arthritis Sufferers

This book is a compilation of recipes for people following a particular diet believed to relieve the pain of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Foods eliminated from the diet include red meat, fruit of any kind, dairy products, additives, preservatives and chemicals. The book provides a brief description of the diet, the results to be expected, tips etc. This is a revised and updated edition.

**P/b, 232pp, Aerospace Publications, PO Box 1777 Fyshwick ACT 2609. Ph:02-9972-7019. RRP \$19.95.**

### FOLK ART - Eva & Nicole Tummel Gifts For All Seasons

Over 100 projects are outlined in this colourful book. The projects are along the lines of the hand-painted 'folk art' items that are commonly found in craft and gift shops: flower and heart motifs painted onto common domestic items such as fridge magnets, terracotta pots, coat hangers. Readers are not instructed how to make the items but how to paint and decorate them. Patterns for the images suggested, paint colours and how-to-paint instructions are provided.

**P/b, 112pp, Kangaroo Press/Simon & Schuster, PO Box 507, East Roseville 2069. Ph:02-9415-9917. RRP \$19.95.**

# GRASSIFIEDS

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## PROPERTY FOR SALE NEW SOUTH WALES

**CHARACTER RAIL CARRIAGE**, on 100 elevated ac in scenic bushland valley between Cowra and Young. Comfy with solar power and hot water boosted by s/c/stove. Gas appliances, 22,000 lt tanks plus dam. Levelled sites for house and workshop \$79,000. Ph: 02-6383-7337 for info & kit on this special place.

**CENTRAL WEST VILLAGE**, 30 mins Parkes, 3 b/r cottage, dbl block, dbl garage w/shop, sheds, gardens, a/c, fans, wood heater, Everhot stove, town water, septic, 2 toilets, fences, primary school Bogan Gate. \$70,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6864-1122.

**NORTHERN NSW**, 83 ha (207 ac) f/hold, close Inverell, bitumen roads. Cottage, gas stove, fridge, HWS, shower, bath, toilet, wood heater, American Barn kit, diesel key-start generator, 8500 gal rain tanks, c/van, workshop, garage, Permaculture assess, good r/fall, organic gardens, orchard, vineyard, dams, lifestyle, incomes avail, wildlife. \$130,000. Owner, 02-6723-3459.

**BEGA VALLEY**, 40 ac perm crk frontage, flora & fauna reserve on rear bndry, on school bus route, 10 mins to village, 35 mins to coast. \$34,000. Ph: 03-5158-7238.

**BOMBALA NSW**, f/hold building & land, Presently used as a studio & retail shop. Could be a bed sitter or home. Suit artist who can teach. Ideal one person income. Selling art supplies, s/h books, bric a brac, plants. Interesting shop. \$85,000 WIWO incl stock. Shadehouse at the rear. Ph: 02-6458-3607.

**NEW ENGLAND TABLELANDS**, bush block with a difference, 100 f/hold ac, 18 km from Glen Innes, 300° panoramic views, perm water, unspoilt natural timber, pasture & wildlife. Partly built stone dwelling. The things dreams are made of. \$35,000 ONO. Ph: Diana Corcoran, 02-6732-2499.

**NYMBOIDA**, 45 km sth of Grafton, excel alternative community, good school, pub, close to Nymboida River for swimming & Gulang Creek for white water canoeing. 25 ac fronting onto Glens Creek Rd, approx 2/3 undulating & 1/3 steep. Views from a high ridge, small crk, good access, heavily timbered with spotted gum, tallow wood, ironbark and mahogany. Electricity at front fence. \$33,000. 75 ac adjoining above property, very private, beautiful secluded house site with huge 7 million lt dam for swimming. Excellent shack, fully liveable with water etc, work shed, good access, undulating land, 3 valleys, lots of timber. Ph: Annie for inspection, 02-6649-4166.

**BEGA VALLEY**, 12.76 ha (30 ac) undulating grazing land, basalt soil, shade trees, perm crk. Log/stone built house 3 b/rs, faces north, verandahs, estab gardens/orchard. Sealed rd frontage, school bus to gate, 2.5 km from market town & 1/2 hr to beach. Land suitable for grape cultivation. Owners retiring due to health. Ph: 02-6493-4922, or 02-6493-2369.

**MOONAN FLAT**, near Scone, 1 1/2 ac in sml village. Power, fenced. \$18,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4283-3382.

**ASIAN MELTDOWN SALE GOSFORD**, Central Coast NSW, 1/2 ac 2500 sq m. Nature reserve adjoins, birds & wildlife abound. Five mins to shops, beaches, schools, express trains: 40 mins to Sydney CBD or Newcastle. Lovely 3 b/r brick home 11 yrs old: living, dining, timber kitchen, verandah, garage, study, big patio. Sensational easy bush living close to civilisation. \$160,000 for a quick sale, more if it drags out. No agents. Ph: 02-4323-3786.

**MID COAST - TOWN TEN MINUTES**. Handy 177 ac, fertile organic valley, treed ridge, perm clean crk, swimming holes. Good access, elec, ph, DA. \$118,000. Your own sanctuary. Beechwood (near Port Macquarie). Ph: 02-6688-6337.

**MID NORTH COAST**, peaceful retreat 30 km west of Kempsey, 10 chemical-free ac on perm crk next to state forest. Very comfortable 2 b/r home with power, ph, SHW, s/c fire, estab veggie garden & f/trees, 2 tanks, 2 dams, fenced. Abundant wildlife, clean air, clean water, clean soil, beaut valley, great neighbours. \$91,500. Ph: Sue, 02-6651-9638.

**ORARA RIVER FRONTAGE**, 105 ac, 60 km Coffs Harbour, views, sandstone cliffs, wildlife, house site, elec & ph avail, bitumen rd. Bargain at \$59,990. For more info ph: 02-6688-2016.

**NAMBUCCA VALLEY**, choice chemical-free 22 1/2 ac. Creek, perm well, 5000 gal tank, 130 fruit & nut trees, dairy bails, sheds. Restored colonial timber home, return verandahs, 3 b/r, french doors, living, potbelly, dining, modern bathroom, new kitchen. Power & ph. School bus at gate. Beaches 30 mins. \$180,000. Ph: 02-6564-7739.

**GRAFTON THIRTY MINUTES**, Armidale Rd, Nymboida Riverside, charming, solid 3 b/r, all mod cons, 2 ac, mature trees/gardens. \$79,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4632-1376 AH.

**CLOWNS FORCED TO MOVE** to paradise so must sell. Dungog, Barrington Tops area. Sydney CBD under 3 hrs. Attractive WW1 w/b cottage. Large block on edge of town. Great views from beautiful new verandah & upper level, 3 b/rs. Large rooms, high ceilings, stained glass. New roof, guttering, bearers. Permaculturesque garden planted for fruit, flowers & fragrance. Bathroom/laundry need work, that's why it's cheap. \$85,000. Ph: 02-6689-1844. Email: long-shot@lis.net.au

**FAR SOUTH COAST**, 101 ac, being 10 ac, fertile river flat, irrigation licence, suitable organic production, horticulture. Balance light bush to old growth bounding nat pk. Colorbond workshop, good access, good neighbours, school bus 10 mins, Canberra 3 1/2 hours. \$95,000. Ph: 02-6493-7307.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**GREAT VIEWS**, 2 x 12 ac blocks for sale. Power running through both blocks. \$38,000 each block, or \$70,000 for the two. Please ph: 02-6494-2193 AH.

**FORTY KILOMETRES FROM COAST**, near Vic/NSW border, in real nat pk country, 48 ha (120 ac) all bush, west boundary is approx 1 km of crk. Wildlife galore, good soil, kind climate, ultra-secluded. Suit group, friends, have your own forest, maybe sell some, keep some. \$79,000. Ph: 02-4784-1020.

**MID NORTH COAST**, midway historic Bellinger and Dorrigo in the idyllic Thora Valley. Absolute riverfront, 5 fertile ac, suit hobby farm, permaculture. Unlimited gravity-fed spring water. Borders nat pk. Four b/r tasteful timber home, separate s/c cabin/studio on river. School bus at gate, Steiner school 10 mins, lovely community, ideal lifestyle. \$259,000. Ph: 02-6655-8676.

**ACREAGE, CHEAP**, Hunter Valley Merriwa Shire, lots 1, 23, 26, Goulburn Rivers Nat Pk, 50 ac blocks from \$20,000. All questions, call Geoff, 02-6548-2254, or Tod, 0413-891-921.

**HOLBROOK NINE ACRES**, quiet, close to town, hospital, school bus, well, shade trees, electric fences, woodlot, sheds, room for horse, 3 b/r house, wood heater, 45 mins Albury. \$125,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6036-2799.

**TEMORA NSW**, Riverina area, unique opportunity to purchase an early 1900s 3 b/r cottage on 8 1/2 ac of good virgin soil in prosperous town. Has well maintained original cedar and Wonderlich interiors except modern kitchen & bathroom with verandahs on 3 sides & cottage garden. Built on NE slope it has lovely rural views, but only 1 km from major shopping centre. \$190,000, or can sell in 2 blocks. Ph: 02-6977-2827.

**TWEED VALLEY, MO**, share, 10 ac, biodynamic history, f/trees, mtn views, r/forest, crystal water, swimming holes, 3 b/r solar power dwelling. \$80,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6680-3486.

**EXCELLENT HOBBY FARM**, stunning views, i/g pool, renovated, spacious 4 b/r, much loved home on 4.6 ac at Far North Coast Spring Grove, 17 mins Lismore, Casino 13 mins, 50 mins Byron Bay. Verandahs 3 sides, high ceilings, polished timber floors, built-ins, d/garage, lge shed, landscaped gardens, orchard, paddocks, perm crk, school bus at gate. \$198,000. No better place to raise a family. Details & photos: Maggie, 02-6663-1408, Bruce 02-6628-2305.

**NORTHERN RIVERS**, all the hard work done, private, 1 hr west of Casino. 'Echo Valley', 40 ac cleared, 60 ac natural bush, floodfree, freehold. Two b/r home; gas stove, HWS, 2-way fridge; solar power, backup generator, Norsman fire-place, ph. Gardens, orchard, greenhouse, chookpen. Two Colorbond sheds 45' x 25', 30' x 20'; 14' x 18' workshop, 3 more sheds, 5 c/ports. Fully fenced, 11 paddocks, stables, lge piggery, loading ramp, cattle crush. Four big dams, 7 water tanks. Tall millable timber, school bus front gate, 17 cattle & chooks. \$115,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6666-1229 early am, late pm. Also avail tractor, slasher, backhoe, ride-on mower, very reasonable prices.

HEADLINES: GR 131 - DECEMBER 20TH  
GR132 - FEBRUARY 28TH

**SNOWY RIVER, BOMBALA REGION**, secluded 300 ac scenic wilderness, fresh water stream, numerous home sites. Lots of building materials. \$38,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5977-6041.

**FAR NORTH COAST**, 35 km NW Lismore, beautiful solid spacious home, wide verandahs, elevated position, extensive views, 4 ac, u/house garage and workshop. Organic gardens, f/trees, complete privacy. Power, ph. Cabin, u/cover c/van. Secure strata development. School buses. \$159,000. Ph: 02-6633-7033.

**DEEPWATER, NORTHERN TABLELANDS**, modern 4 b/r home on 2 subdivided ac. Fact sheet with pictures avail. Genuine bargain at \$89,000. Ph: 02-6734-5349.

**MUST SELL: \$30,000 (good deal)**. Two ac share strata title community, timber cabin, 3 tanks, 3 sheds, 1 studio, spring-fed dam, solar power, phone connected, 40 mins from Lismore, Nimbin & Kyogle. Enquiries evening: 02-6633-7040.

**NAMBUCCA VALLEY**, 52 ac, beautiful 2 storey mud brick home, 3 b/rs, huge verandahs, crystal clear perm crk, acres private r/forest, 30 ft x 60 ft shed + tractor. Borders state forest. First to see will go troppo! \$295,000. Ph: 02-6564-4082.

**FAR NORTH COAST, MT WARNING AREA**, house, gardens, orchard area on stable legal MO on 208 beautiful ac. Rainforest, crks, internal bitumen access. School bus at gate, 15 mins Uki, 30 mins Murwillumbah, 45 mins to beaches. House unfinished but livable, the hard work's done. Solar/hydro power, gravity water, stunning lead-light windows, lge covered verandah areas with forest views. \$70,000. All reasonable offers considered. Ph: 02-6629-3425.

**DEUA NATIONAL PARK**, 15 mins Moruya, 20 mins beach, 3 b/r stone, solar house on 60 ac, approx 10 ac fenced river flats, some r/forest. School bus, phone, bass fishing, estab orchard. Ideal market garden, horses, base for wilderness venture. \$180,000. Ph: 02-4474-3091.

**FAR NORTH COAST, NIMBIN**, 100 ac (40 ha) undulating mainly cleared land with 15 ac of park-like bush. Abundance of water, 2 lge areas of nth-facing protected land, grow anything. Good 3 b/r home & 15' x 45' steel shed with power, kitchen, toilet, water etc. Magnificent views \$220,000 ONO. Ph: owner, 02-6689-1339.

**TOORAWENAH IDEAL BIODIVERSITY CLIMATE**, 5 b/r house, 47 ac estab herbs, orchard, chook yards, cow yard. Abundant water, yabbies, fish. Easiest way to achieve self-suff. All the hard-work done! \$90,000, CHEAP. Ph: 02-6848-1180.

**PILLAR VALLEY** (b/w Grafton & Wooli/Minnie Water), sandstone block house on 100 ac lovely bush, mtns, waterfall, perm crk, 2 dams, shed/bus visitors' accom, power, solar HWS, 10 mins to beach. \$235,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6643-4908.

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**IVERELL**, 25 ac, 4 b/r, brick veneer, Cape Cod design, 3 sheds, 8 km CBD, 4 tanks, 20,000 gal. Full brick, 1 b/r, self-contained granny flat attached. School bus 700 m. Small orchard. All farming equipment, incl tractor 220 hrs, ride-on, 5 speed with attachments, slasher, chainsaw etc. Suited to olives, herbs, possible future sub-division. Town water avail. Owners retiring. \$185,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6721-0123.

**ONE BEDROOM - BESSER BRICK**, w/ender, solar power & water, generator, washing machine, 2 dams, 25 ac, part cleared, tar rd, 10 mins Gulgong, 25 mins Mudgee. \$50,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6374-1830.

**ORGANIC ACRES** (3) w/w/ender, mudbrick/cypress pine. Rural town 45 mins, Wagga, NSW. Ideal soil for almonds. \$40,000. Ph: 03- 5332-8009.

**MID NORTH COAST**, 48 ha bush retreat, perm crk, well timbered, several home sites, 19 km to town, 40 mins to coast. Valued \$77,000 reduced to \$63,000. Ph: 02-6568-8214.

**FAR NORTH COAST NSW**, 250 ac close coast, Lismore, some plantation tea tree, room for expansion, 3 b/r cabin, solar, ph, elevated. \$135,000. Ph: owner, 02-6629-0302.

**HOLBROOK SHIRE**, 1500 ac, f/hold virgin country. \$100,000 ONO. Ph: Steve, 02-6036-8164.

**ONE-SIXTH SHARE**, in 100 ac, MO, Christian Community. Lovely 3 b/r Besser/stone-face house, lovely gardens, mtn views, BBQ area, machinery shed, enclosed vegie garden, s/c/stove, potbelly, big dam, closed in yard, good access, ph, diesel generator & solar system. Committed Christians only please. \$160,000. Ph: 02-4457-3338 after 6pm, ask for Ron. South coast, NSW, MILTON.

## QUEENSLAND

**FIVE PICTURESQUE ACRES**, refurbished 2 b/r/sleepout Queenslander, back deck, air cond, fans, wood heater, nice gardens, fully fenced, dam, stables, shed, BBQ, double carport, 2 x 5000 gal water tanks. Walk school, shops, 20 mins North Gympie, 1 hr Hervey Bay/Noosa. \$103,000. Ph: 07-5484-6323, or 0412-498-156.

**TARA THIRTY ACRES**, full of Cypress & pine & full dam, will be sadly missed, but must sell. Bargain \$16,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4377-1535.

**SECLUDED BIRDWATCHERS' RETREAT**, Macleay Island, Q. Two b/r dwelling in forest setting with all services. \$78,000 ONO. Ph: 018-729-865.

**GOLD COAST**, Springbrook, 1/4 ac r/forest week-ender, fully self-contained. \$75,000. Ph: 07-5572-7106.

**GLENWOOD** 1 1/2 ac gently sloped, NW aspect, rear forest, 1/2 hour Gympie, 1/2 hour Maryborough. Asking \$20,000. Will trade camper sml c/van or vehicle. Ph: 07-4938-1450.

**GOLD COAST HINTERLAND** - opportunity for own health farm (restaurant, log cabins etc). Kooralbyn International Resort, sky diving etc, 22 ac, corner, magnif views above lookout, undulating, lightly timbered, dam/silver perch, rockpool etc, 2 b/r to be extended, town water, elec, ph, school bus, International School, \$179,000 ONO. Eight ac adjacent \$59,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5544-6259.



# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### QUEENSLAND

**TROPICAL MOUNTAIN RETREAT**, nth Qld, 2 hrs from Townsville, 3 b/r, beautifully finished brick veneer house, 19 x 9 m with verandahs on 2 sides. Large kitchen with Raeburn stove. Large lounge & dining, sep family with 3/4 pool table. Large shed, bush house, water tanks, elec fencing, power, ph. Set amongst 20 ha open forest near Mount Fox, 2 ha cleared & irrigated with macadamia & other mixed fruit & nut trees. \$189,000. Ph: 07-4777-5164. Email Marstream@bigpond.com

**GIN GIN**, 25 ac, power/ph avail, adj houses. \$40,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4973-4967.

**JIMBOOMBA**, 15 ac, virgin bush, house site, dam, shed 30' x 20'. Absolutely private. Five mins supermarket, school, 45 mins Brisbane. Vendor terms avail. \$90,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5543-1462 AH.

**APPLETHORPE**, 10 mins NW of Stanthorpe, 68 ac bush & rocks. Two units: one 2 storey timber, 3 b/r, s/c/stove with WH. One steel frame unit, one b/r, gas fridge, stove, HW. Solar power to both units. Generator, tractor, implements, pumps. One dam 2 waterholes. Adjoins forest. \$154,000. Ph: 07-4683-6344.

**BUNDABERG/INNES PARK**, \$165,000. Architect passive solar, 2 b/r permaculture food garden, f/trees, eggs, walk beach. Ph: 02-9528-8614. Eco RE Australia. www.eco.com.au

**YEPPON/BYFIELD**, \$175,000. 130 ac r/forest, dam, 120 mango orchard, water catchment 100%, 1800 mmpa. Urgent sale. Ph: 02-9528-8614. Eco RE Australia. www.eco.com.au

**NOOSA/COOROY**, \$180,000. Eight ha, views, lge livable shed, bathroom WC, tanks, power, ph, dam, r/forest. Ph: 02-9528-8614. Eco RE Australia. www.eco.com.au

**ATHERTON TABLELANDS**, 1 1/2 hrs Cairns. Private, new, roomy one b/r highest steel & timber home on 1.047 ha, r/forest backdrop, expansive view. Drive-in c/port, ramp to front door. Under-house w/shop, gravity-feed water, private all-weather rd. \$159,000. Ph: 07-4096-5058. POB 438, MALANDA 4885.

**ESK - EIGHTY MINUTES BRISBANE**, 60 ac good scrub soil, 10 ac lucerne, 30 ac barley, balance grazing, 2 dams bore, fencing, trees, views. \$100,000. Ph: 07-5423-2089.

**LEAVE THE RAT RACE**, home & 25 ac, 19 km Gin Gin. Three y/o all elec 3 b/r home with BIRs. Very workable open plan kitchen, dining and lounge. Polished cyprus pine floors. Tiled bathroom, toilet & laundry. Norseman heating stove, 5 ceiling fans, composting toilet. High blocked front with lovely outlook from balcony over park-like grounds. Workshop under and space for 2 cars. Ramp at back giving access to well estab organic veggie garden. Three 5000 gal aqua-plate tanks, 2 with r/water, one filled from dam, 2 dams with fire pump and reticulated pipelines to well estab landscaped gardens, fruit trees, flowering trees. School bus and mail delivery at gate. \$100,000 reduced from \$120,000 for quick sale. Ph: 07-4157-6596.

**LOWMEAD - FORTY ACRES**, bush block, medium timbered. Take this off our hands! Good price: \$23,000. Ph: 02-6644-9040.

### PLACING AN AD?

See page 88 for details

**GOLD COAST HINTERLAND**, acreage property & business. Established hilltop 20 ac bushland property with lge 3 b/r + office. Colonial style cedar home (minor finishing required). Close to Dreamworld, shops, rail, etc. Home situated in secluded area & is self-suff with comprehensive renewable energy 240 volt power system with auto gen backup. 12 m x 7 m work shed, 10 m x 4.5 m reinforced w/g cellar, seasonal crk, dam & waterfall, irrigated veggie garden & citrus plants. Many other features incl future subdivision potential in rapidly sought after area. Computer generated graphic business operated from property with long estab client base. Comfortably operated by one person. Full equipment inventory list & training can be provided. A great opportunity to enjoy an alternative lifestyle & earn an excellent reliable income from home. Price \$235,000. Genuine reason for sale. Private sale. Ph: 0413-723-824, or 0411-856-478 (avail Jan 1999).

**READY TO LIVE IN**, beautifully appointed Queenslander set on over 1000 m sq. Marble benchtops, dishwasher, lge pantry, gas hot water & cooking, western red cedar flooring, stained glass windows & doors, 3 b/rs, 2 bathrooms, + en suite, over 30 varieties of f/trees, extensive herb garden, shed for poultry & mtn setting, opposite golf course, 5 mins to beach, 12 mins to Maroochydore or Noosa. A lifestyle in itself. \$215,000. Ph: Rob James, Ray White MARCOOLA, 07-5448-8888.

**RIVERFRONT, MILLSTREAM RIVER**, 8 km to Millstream Falls Nat Pk, Atherton Tablelands, 2.8 ac, power, ph, town water, fenced, driveway, house pad, dam, rough earthwork is done, beautiful gum trees. Just \$59,000, private sale. Ph: 07-4157-4059.

**RUSSELL ISLAND**, artist retreat, 2 b/r home with studio, can be used as 3rd b/r. Cathedral ceilings, stained wood floor, open-plan living. Carport. Self-suff garden with bush views. Must sell. \$57,000. Ph: 07-3409-1484.

**REAL RURAL LIVING**, 354 ac only 7 km country town of Miles. Timbered, well shaped land for maximum privacy. Good high homesites & area suitable good waterhole. \$28,750. Ph: 07-4163-3044.

**NATURE RETREAT**, 8 ac Nanango area, with bush tracks through vine scrub. Borders 5000 ac beautiful state forest. Secluded end of road position, with very high level home site. \$24,950. Ph: 07-4163-3044.

**BLUEWATER**, 1 1/4 ac, 25 mins from Townsville, University. Nth QLD, 3 km from beach, school, shop, PO. Beautifully renovated Queenslander, timber construction on steel stumps, cyclone coded, new shed, 2 lge b/rs, study, sleepout, high ceilings, fans t/out. Designed for the tropics. Fenced, veggie patch, chook pen, paddock, good soil, crk frontage, flood free. Bitumen road, town water, power. School bus, mail to gate, f/trees, garden irrigated. Great community. \$122,000. Ph: 07-4788-6383.

*Don't forget the deadline if wishing to advertise in Grass Roots*

**SEVENTY PRISTINE ACRES**, Border Ranges, SE Qld, 10 mins town, 2 1/2 hrs Brisbane. Weekender with serviced access & ph. Spectacular views, surrounding nat pk & wineries. Ginseng growing conditions. Ten mins Stanthorpe. Live, work, relax. \$58,000. Ph: 07-3408-7700, 015-580-544.

**ONE HUNDRED PRISTINE ACRES, SE QLD**, 1 1/2-km to hwy, 14 km Stanthorpe, 2 1/2 hrs Brisbane. Serviced access, spectacular views, gigantic boulders, surrounding nat pks & wineries. Escape, live, work or just relax. \$59,000. Ph: 07-3408-7700, 015-580-544.

**BUNDABERG, GIN GIN ROAD**, f/hold 1 ac in a 480 ac private village. \$30,000. Eighteen left at 4-11-98. Suit active people interested in self-reliance. Already 60 people live here with more on the way. Ages from 1 yr old to 84 yrs young. For more info ph: Barry or Christine, 07-4157-2850 or 07-4153-1303.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**ROCKLEIGH, EIGHTY ACRES**, 15 ac Heritage listed Mallee scrub, 10 ac reveg, 4 sheds, 2 dams, ph, exc views, close to power, 1/2 an hr (30 km) from Mount Barker/Murray Bridge, \$65,000. Ph: 08-8391-3172.

**MENINGIE WEST**, 14 3/4 ac, 2 residences, situated 12 km from Coorong Nat Pk, 2 hrs from Adelaide. Garage, lge shed, well fenced unlimited lake water 12000 gal, r/water, windmills, mains power, alternative power. Productive f/trees, veggie garden, chook yard, croquet court, pond, mail delivery. Price \$125,000. Ph: 08-8575-4252.

**QUORN, FLINDERS RANGES**, 3 b/r transportable on lge block situated on edge of town with views of the ranges. Power, town water, area school. \$34,500. Ph: 08-8595-5399.

**MACCLESFIELD, SA**, hobby farm, 6.4 ac, beautiful Adelaide Hills. Over 50 varieties fruit & nut trees, on edge of picturesque village. Bore, 2 dams, solid 2-storey European-style home - passive solar design, quality fixtures. Wood stove, solar water heating, reverse cycle a/c, coolroom. Wood lot & pine forest. \$279,000. Ph: 08-8388-9334.

### VICTORIA

**CASTERTON, VIC**, 3 b/r house & business. Renovated cottage, beautiful river views, lots of shedding. Income v/good. Suit semi-retired or pensioner. House & business \$43,000. House \$35,000. Ph: 03-5581-1427.

**ONE ACRE HIDEAWAY**, national forest, semi-completed 1 b/r dwelling, beautiful spot, plenty wildlife & water, 30 km major town, Brimboat via Casterton. \$8500. Ph: 03-5581-1427.

**MERINO, WESTERN DISTRICT**, 29 ac productive undulating country, 2 dams, native plantation, Victorian 4 b/r home, tank & town water, great views, near school. Ph: 03-9379-3386.

**NEAR BUCHAN**, East Gippsland, leasehold property of 2.5 ha. Large fully renovated house incl lge bathroom with spa. Polished floors t/out open plan kitchen/dining, 2 b/rs, lge verandah overlooking orchard & beautiful views. For further info ph: Jackie, 03-9787-4874, or Allan, 0414-356-985.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### VICTORIA

**PIRRON YALLOCK**, Colac, 5.5 ac farmlet, ample dam water, 17,000 gal r/water. Suit alternative farming, 3 b/r w/b renovated home, gas h/w & stove, OFF. \$75,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5491-1037 for more details.

**WANDONG DISTRICT**, 50 ac, nicely undulating natural bush. Dam, seclusion, power available. \$55,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**LANCEFIELD, FIVE ACRES**. Executive living in bush-like setting. Brick veneer homestead, 4 b/r, WIR, BIR, en suite, spacious living areas, rumpus room. Large deck at rear. Town water. \$187,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**PYALONG, 1.5 ACRES**. Spacious cedar home of 3 b/r, open plan living areas, garage/workshop, fuel heater, air cond, lge billiard room, f/trees. \$89,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**HEATHCOTE, ONE ACRE**, immaculate 2 b/r home in elevated location, BIRs, enclosed verandah, freshly painted, garage/w/shop, greenhouse, BBQ area, forest views. \$89,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**LANCEFIELD AREA**, 2.5 ac, brick veneer homestead of 4 b/r, en suite, wide verandahs, lge pergola, paved BBQ area. Bush outlook. School bus at gate. \$112,500. From \$12,000 deposit. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**BROADFORD DISTRICT**, 75 ac undulating bush, abundant wildlife, dam, crk. Driveway & house site cleared with fantastic views to Great Dividing Range. Previous building permit granted. \$63,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**STRATH CREEK**, 168 ac, magnificent views, end of court location, lge shed. \$100,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**SEYMOUR, TWENTY ACRES**. Spacious ranch style brick veneer home with stunning views to Tallarook Ranges. Four b/r, town water, dam, huge shed, \$169,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**STRATH CREEK, FIFTY-ONE ACRES**. Scenic, part bush, sealed road, bargain, \$49,000. Robert Gordon Real Estate, High St, WALLAN. Ph: 03-5783-1911.

**NORTH-EAST VICTORIA**, 25 mins Albury - Wodonga. Architect designed passive solar house, cathedral ceilings, 3-4 b/rs. Elevated position, views to Mt Bogong & Lake Hume, 19 ac, pasture + some regrowth, estab gardens. Land for Wildlife status. \$185,000. Ph: 02-6026-4260 (owner unavailable Dec 23 - Jan 21).

**SOUTH GIPPSLAND - FOSTER NORTH**, 80 ac, hill country, magnif views, 22 sq brick home, lge patio, garden, good dams, sheep & cattle yards, perm crk with 100s of blackwood trees, good pasture, 'droughtproof'. \$195,000. Ph: owner, 03-5664-6563.

DEADLINES: GR 131 - DECEMBER 20TH  
GR 132 - FEBRUARY 28TH

**BRIAGOLONG, NEAR STRATFORD**. Friendly diverse community, long history of alternative lifestyles. Lovely bush & wildlife, 5 1/4 ac in foothills, partially cleared, next Freestone Crk. Private, close to school bus. Comfortable 20' x 40' x 12' zinc shed, fully insulated, plastered, with mezzanine. Includes workshop with external access. Permit to live in shed while building. Current permit, plans for beautiful 20 square mud brick home, have completed preplumbing & slab. A going concern with \$10,000 fully automated solar system, 10,000 gal concrete tank with solar pumping, storage shed, separate toilet (septic), dam, some materials, too much to mention. It's all ready to go! \$75,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5145-5240.

**SEVENTY-ONE ACRES** in tiny secluded valley 41 km north of Mallacoota. Surrounded nat pks & forest. Birdwatchers' paradise, prolific wildlife, magnif views, total tranquillity. Excellent potential wild ginseng. Good road, soil & rainfall. Spray-free history, 10 ac cleared, 2 dams, hay shed, c/van. \$68,000. Ph: 03-5158-8319 after 7pm.

**DAYLESFORD AREA-SPRING HILL**, 1 hr Melbourne/15 mins Daylesford, 6.5 ac (fenced/part forest). Picturesque views over rolling countryside. Seven year old, nth facing, 18 sq timber home, full length decking, cathedral pine-lined ceiling, 3 b/r (carpet, BIRs & master full en suite/WIR), family room with s/c heater, Tasmanian oak kitchen, formal dining/lounge/ polished floors/big OFF, quality fittings/doors/drapes. Large water tank/well, ample shedding, chook pen, f/trees, estab gardens. School bus at gate. \$145,000. Ph: Michael, 03-5424-8377 AH, 03-9344-6021 BH. Email: m.budzevski@studentadmin.unimelb.edu.au

**ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE IN WEDDERBURN**, Central Vic. Modern barn-style cedar home on 26 ac of beautiful secluded bush. Solar power & wind generator. Plenty of r/water, huge dam & pump + 1 b/r self-contained cottage, double garage, fernery, glasshouse, solar shed, feed shed, 7 chook pens, wildflowers, birds, kangaroos, fantastic views. No spray ever used on this property. Three mins to town, 45 mins to Bendigo. Come & make us an offer on our touch of paradise. Urgent sale \$59,000. Ph: 03-5494-3140.

### TASMANIA

**THE BEAUTIFUL HUON VALLEY**, south Tasmania, 'Long Acres', a western red cedar 3 b/r home on 13 ac. This property has been supporting a primary producer's licence by operating a dairy goat stud with guaranteed sale of all the milk we could produce. The property is 45 mins from Hobart, 10 mins to major town of Huonville, 5 mins to schools by bus. \$85,000. For a full colour brochure please contact Wayne & Salina Paulus: 03-6297-1584.

**WESTERWAY, PLATYPUS, TROUT, SNOW-FIELDS**. Approx 5 ac, 4 b/rs, sheds, sml corral, access to Tyenna River. Rewired, courtyard, study workshop. A great little hobby farm. \$75,000-\$85,000. Ph: Jeff (agent) 03-6272-3055.

**KEMPTON**, circa 1840 Georgian sandstone, 3 b/rs, cellar and attic, open fireplaces, shop frontage business - antiques, crafts, etc - can produce up to \$500 per wk on average. \$120,000. Ph: Jeff (agent) 03-6272-3055.

**WESTERWAY, PLATYPUS, TROUT, SNOW-FIELDS**, 7 glorious ac with f/tree orchard, Japanese gardens. Huge rural sheds, fully fenced on river. Two homes: one has 2 b/rs, the other a single b/r. Beautiful country-style stone cottage. \$125,000. Ph: Jeff (agent) 03-6272-3055.

**BE PRÉPARED** for the coming world turmoil on this fertile, secluded, 40 ac forest block near Sheffield Tas. With building timber & unpolluted crk you can set yourself up to ride out the upheaval. Contact Doug, ph: 08-9622-1950.

**NORTH-WEST TASMANIA**, 9.902 ha, f/hold, 1/2 land beautiful r/forest, remainder variety native regrowth. Excellent basalt soil & water supply. Hut s/c/stove. Established vegie gardens, f/trees, wood shed. Price \$42,000. For more info contact: H Lee, LORINNA, Tas, 7306.

**SCAMANDER, SUNNY EAST COAST**. Do you desire a wonderful lifestyle? All organic, fully developed 11 ac, animals, chooks, orchard, productive garden, lge frontage to clean river, very convenient modern 5 b/r brick home + guest cottage. All low maintenance park-like landscaping, exotic & native trees, forest & mtn outlooks. Beaches, shops, post office 13 mins. Unique & beautiful \$250,000. Ph: 03-6372-5088.

**FEDERATION WEATHERBOARD HOME**, 3 b/r. Features: Baltic pine walls, some pressed tin ceilings, combustion & gas cooking, open fires, Tassie Barrel heating. Situated on 3/4 ac, crk & swimming hole 50 ft from back door. Flat block with f/trees, gardens. Sheds, garage, second toilet outside. St Helens 35 mins, 1 hr to Launceston, close to Ben Lomond Ski resort & Lake Leake. Abundant fresh & sea water fishing. Doctor in town, primary school 5 mins away, high school bus at front door, shops 3 mins away. \$55,000. Contact Rod Rattray on 03-6376-1592.

**TWO BEDROOM HOUSE**, 75 mins from Launceston. Set under Benlomond, ex-mining town of Rossarden. Two wood heaters, pine kitchen and dining, lge block, new roof, town water. Surrounded by forestry land. \$18,500. N Goss, C/- PO SCAMANDER, Tas, 7215.

**NORTHERN TASMANIA**, Georgetown, Pipers River, 30 mins Launceston, bush block, 70 ac, cedar clad house, privacy, sea views, power, ph, spring water, has sandstone and sand for crafts. \$115,000. Ph: 03-6343-2199.

**TASMAN PENINSULA**, sheltered, sunny 60 ac bush block, rd frontage. Overlooks beautiful bay, dolphins' playground. Good investment, can be subdivided, or build your dream home. Six mins from fantastic beaches, fishing etc. \$125,000 ONO. Ph: 03-6243-7763.

**BEAUTIFUL NORTH-WEST TASMANIA**, 15 mins Wynyard (schools, airport) 27 ac, undulating prime pasture, some bush, lge 3 b/r brick veneer homestead, big C/B lockable shed, garden/goat shed, ample water (3 dams, springs) organic vegie & berry garden, f/trees estab bushwalking track. Escape the rat race, find peace & tranquillity. \$125,000 ONO. Ph: 03-6445-4354.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### TASMANIA

**TASMANIA – UPPER ESK**, house on 3½ ac, \$39,000 ONO. Ph: owners, 03-6377-1157 or 6327-4911.

**RURAL BACKPACKER HOSTEL**, 3 b/r manager's house, vegie garden, sheds, fowl yards, sml mixed orchard. Twenty bed hostel building + 6 separate twin rooms, 4.4 ha. Town water & sewerage. Several fenced paddocks for sheep or house cow + 400 heritage (200 varieties) apple trees. Adjoins coastal reserve. Triabunna, school K-10, medical centre, shops, banking. Close Maria Island Nat Pk ferry, 90 km NE Hobart. \$125,000 ONO. Email: roknox@ozemail.com.au Ph: 02-6241-2201. <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~roknox/welcome.html>

**NORTH-EAST TASMANIA**: comfortable 3 b/r home on 11 ac, elevated position, surrounded by thick forest. Magnificent views, overlooking green valley. Power, HWS, ph, good access, s/c/stove, rain and spring water supply. Two perm crks & river boundary (good trout fishing). Many excel walking or riding tracks. \$73,000. Ph: owner (Ian), 03-6353-2483.

## COMMUNITIES/SHARES

**NAMBUCCA HEADS** ½ hour, affordable land, 1200 ac. Backs onto state forest, ½ share in mostly native forest, 20 ac crk flats, 2 ac relatively level house site, cabin, ph, 4000 gal r/w/tanks, dam, f/trees, all year crk, swimming holes. Was \$45,000 now \$33,000 ONO, must sell quickly. Ph: Monica & George, 02-9973-1580.

**YOUNG COUPLE**, see property wanted.

**NEAR WINGHAM**, ½ share 450 ac, 2 storey home, solar & generator, 4 WD access. Must sell \$40,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6679-3184.

**COMMUNITY FOR ADULTS**. Are you passionate about growing plants? Do you prefer to live with like-minded people? Are you interested in forming intimate r/ships with others? Do you enjoy personal growth? Are you tired of being the only one willing to take responsibility? Would you like to be part of a Simple Agrarian Community? If you answered a resounding YES to every question, we'd like to send you more information about our community. Please send an outline of your experience and interests in relation to the questions, plus an SASE to: PO Box 554, Gympie 4570.

**PLEASE HELP! I'M RESEARCHING** intentional communities. If you're living, or have lived in one, please contact: Meeka, 3 Algona Rd, CHARLESTOWN, 2290. Ph: 02-4943-9855.

**PERMACULTURE PARADISE**, nth coast, Nimbin, ½ share on community, 2.7 km from town. Two timber houses, open plan, loft & verandahs, overlooking beautiful Nimbin Valley. Naturally landscaped gardens filled with an abundance of plant species, 100s of palms, natives + bamboos, ponds & vegie garden, 500 & 1000 gal tanks, 2 nurseries, good access. Community has common orchards, spring-fed dams, laundry & workshop facilities. \$80,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6688-2381, Andi.

## PLACING AN AD?

See page 88 for details

**FAR SOUTH COAST NSW**, ½ share in forested 40 ac, 40 mins from Cobargo. Includes mud brick shack with ph, solar power & inverter, dam with fish & pump, f/trees, herbs, grapes, kiwifruit etc, on private river frontage. \$70,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4477-9502.

## BUSINESSES FOR SALE

**MARIMBA, PART-TIME BUSINESS** for sale (see GR125). Make musical instruments for a living. Simple to operate, very good potential, all ground work done, includes tools. No experience necessary as training included. \$12,500 ONO. Ph: 07-5499-9965.

**UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY** to enjoy a relaxed way of life, licensed country restaurant-tavern-milk bar-subnews agency-post office. Plus other sidelines. Attached house, lge bungalow, 2¼ ac, ideal cottage industry. Plant & stock \$135,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5094-1288.

**NATURE-LOO IS UP FOR SALE**. This is your chance to buy an innovative business that is a leading composting toilet manufacturer in Australia. Excellent returns, low overheads & potential for massive growth. Currently based in Brisbane but could be relocated easily to anywhere in Australia. Purchaser will own all patents, trademarks, moulds, tools of trade, systems operation manual & specialised software with lge database of potential customers. Priced for quick sale at \$145,000. Ph: 1800-641-566.

**ESTABLISHED RAMMED EARTH**, lifestyle & employment, family business, est 13 years, Denmark, WA. Ph: 08-9840-9390, 0418-936-550.

## WANTED TO RENT/CARETAKE

**EXPERIENCED HORTICULTURE/PERMACULTURE COUPLE** require home on rural acreage to caretake, rent or rent/buy opportunity. Subtropical or warm temperate climate preferred. Ph: John or Sharee, 07-5573-3507.

**LISMORE AREA**, sml or lge property. Very experienced organic horticulturist offering rent + garden/orchard maintenance/establishment. Excellent references. Ph: Phil, 07-3893-2168.

**SEEKING RURAL HOUSE/COTTAGE**. NSW coast or Blue Mountains to caretake or rent. Ph: Russell, 03-9870-7037.

## FOR RENT/ CARETAKER WANTED

**ONE PERSON TO CARETAKE**, n/s, NE VIC. Suit good lifestyle/time-out. Write: H Gibb, WHITLANDS, Vic 3733. Ph: 03-5729-7602.

**PERMANENT CARAVAN SITE** avail on rural acreage SE Qld. Power/water avail. No accom/amenities. Nominal rent only to caretake during owners' absence. Write to: Bushy (GR130), PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**CANBERRA, ROOMS (2) FOR RENT**, join two eccentric vegetarian greenies in a great house on 15 acres on the Murrumbidgee. Lots of water, wildlife, gardens, 30 mins from city centre. \$100 per week. Possible exchange of rent for labour. Ph: 02-6227-5456.

**PERSON(S) TO SHARE/CARETAKE** 30 ac, lower Hunter bush block. Terms neg. Visitors welcome. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

**METCALFE**, one-two year lease on permaculture/Land For Wildlife property. Negotiable rent for caring tenants. Ten acres, crk, older home, all utilities. Ph: Allan, 03-5423-2228.

**MUDGEEO HOUSING CO-OP** is a small urban permaculture village looking for energetic & community spirited gardeners. Two b/r home & 1 b/r unit. Ph: Greg, 02-6372-1132.

**PERSON TO SHARE** older style cottage in isolated country village NW slopes. Suit pensioner looking for home. Rent neg. Reply: PO 'Jacky' (GR129), PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**TWO BEDROOM COTTAGE** 33 km nth of Toowoomba. Tank & spring water. Electric hot water, ph. Run-down vegie garden. Wood & electric stoves. Potbelly in lounge. Compost loo & c/port. \$90 per wk + bond. Also a covered 16 ft van with c/port, electric shower & shed \$25 per wk. Both + power. Ph: 07-4697-9237.

**DELIGHTFUL MUD BRICK COTTAGE** in lush valley, 40 km Warwick. Solar power, perm crk, option purchase, multiple occupancy. \$80 pw + gas. No pets. Ph: 07-4666-1102.

**WANTED CHRISTIANS**, buy or lease, \$40 weekly. House, fertile land, elec water. 30 km Kingaroy. Ph: 07-4162-1631.

## PROPERTY WANTED

**ISOLATED CABIN**, not secluded, on timbered acreage SE Queensland. Cash buyer. Ph: L Kennedy, 07-5525-1052.

**YOUNG COUPLE LOOKING** for sml acreage with crk/dam, dwelling or not, purchase/rent/co-op, alpine area, Mansfield/Marysville. Ph: 03-9379-7717 BH.

## WANTED

**CEDAR ATTIC COTTAGE** with deck, self-suff, sml secluded acreage Border Ranges area. Permanent running crk, mtns, trees, good soil, fenced with all-weather access. Ph: 07-4634-4345.

**HARD-WORKING COUPLE SEEK EMPLOYMENT/work/live-in/situation** on organic farm or similar. Focus on fruit and/or vegetable production. Vegetarian diet, wholistic lifestyle. Organic farming & permaculture certificates. Commence '99 Phone evenings, Jo or Silas: 02-6559-2694. Or write: 3 Figtree Drive, DIAMOND BEACH, NSW 2430.

**RETSSEL MILLRITE STONE MILL** Ph: 02-6359-5253. E McCusker, 'Cherry Tree', Yetholme 2795.

Make Your editor smile –  
Punctuate when writing ads for  
Grass Roots Grassifieds

## WANTED

**REQUIRED, SMALL ACREAGE**, in Queensland, within 2 hrs Brisbane, house can be in need of TLC but livable, reasonably priced. Ph: (collect) NZ, 06-372-5617.

**COUPLE IN THEIR MID FORTIES**, with no children, with their own motor home, are looking for a caretaker's position in a c/van park. Experienced in motel & maintenance management. Ph: 07-5530-2531.

**HELP!** Nineteen year old vegan urgently seeks full-time work: Organic property, retreat, vegetarian restaurant, nanny, alternative/health business. Relocate anywhere in Australia. Honest, reliable, artistic, hard working, keen. Excellent school results: First place English & Home Economics. Experience: cash registers, customer relations, gardening, cooking, child minding. Consider employment exchange part wages, board with other vegans. Ph: Michelle Cross, 07-5483-1267. Write to: 982 Bruce Highway North, GYMPIE, Qld 4570.

**WORK FOR COUPLE**. He: Gold Card painter, complete house maintenance, versatile worker. She: literacy enhancement teacher (primary, ESL, adult), great cook, fair cleaner. Both: good with children & animals. Will consider going almost anywhere, to do almost anything. Have own van, Jan '99 onwards. Write or ph: 07-3200-0139 Susan Garner, 127 Wishaw Road, NTH MACLEAN, Qld 4280.

**INTERESTING WORK WANTED**. Technician, mechanic, fitter, qualified, vast experience most areas. Want help, ideas on alternative houses, energy, power supplies, generators, or just to revive that old machine, bus or whatever? Anything considered, any type of offer, any area, short to medium term. Ph: 02-4960-1958.

**A STRONG YOUNG COUPLE** needed to help set up hostel-style bed & breakfast for Blue Nurses Society. One must be a fair cook & the other interested & able to grow an organic garden. You are welcome to join our organic growing club, we are a very friendly group. Please reply with references to: Mrs Moor, C/- GPO DONNYBROOK 4510. Help us share our resources!

## HANDCRAFTS

**CRAFT WORKSHOP VIDEOS**: Learn at home at your own pace from your personal, highly qualified instructor. VHS titles include spinning, weaving, beadwork, basketry, applique, tatting, knitting, crochet, lacemaking, felting, fabric painting and more. For full catalogue send long SAE to: Quick Spin Wool, Dept GR, RMB 1215, Shelford Rd, MEREDITH 3333. Ph/fax: 03-5286-8224.

**HAVING DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING** small gauge brass screws, hinges, catches, and associated brass fittings? We have an extensive range of 0g, 1g, 2g, 3g, etc from 1/4" long to 1". Also various woodworking tools, glues and abrasives. Backed up by a sharpening service. Send \$3 for catalogue (refundable off 1st order). East Gippsland Saw Service, PO Box 1168, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph: 03-5152-1001. Fax: 03-5152-1001.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PLACING AN AD?

See page 88 for details

**WAX SUPPLIES** for all crafts, candle, beeswax, sealing wax, sculpturing & colour dyes, wick, polish and advice. Ring or write: Handful Wax, PO Box 87, LAKE MUNMORAH 2259. Ph: 02-4358-1224.

**BEADS! BEADS! BEADS**: Unique selections of handmade glass, metal and wooden beads. Also findings, threads and kits available. Cost \$8 for samples, colour copy and info. Write to: Tsunami, PO Box 29, MARGARET RIVER 6285.

**THREAD BUNDLES**, \*\*Clearance sale\*\* Stranded cotton in bundles of 100 x 8 m skeins in 50 assorted colours. Shades matched to DMC - \$20 post free. The Big Bundle of Stranded Cotton of 240 colours - \$50 post free. Weaving reeds from 80c inch avail 8, 10, 12, 15 dents + post. Send 45c stamp for free price list. B/card, M/C, Visa, M/O, Chqs. Arty & Crafty, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763. Fax: 08-8276-2185.

**OUTRAGEOUS CLOTHES**, retro clothing, handmade clothes, beanies, hippy hats, vintage haberdashery at: 'That Gypsy Woman', 10 Howe St, DAYLESFORD 3460. Ph: 03-5348-1700, mobile: 0417-106-649.

**MARCH 26/27/28, 1999**, 24th annual Kapunda Celtic Festival, SA. A mostly free weekend of Celtic music & culture. Village Fair, 10am - 4pm Sunday 28th. Craft stall sites. Contact: Secretary, Box 477, KAPUNDA. 5373.

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

**MAGNETIC FIELD THERAPY** - Medical magnets for arthritis, sports injuries, headaches, neck, shoulder, back, feet & leg problems. Bio Mag Natural Living. Ph: 02-9587-2920 AH.

**HOMOEOPATHIC KITS** to assist your child's natural immunity. Covering 0-5 years. Full instructions incl. Send SAE for more info or \$45 incl postage for kit to: SL PRODUCTS, PO Box 22 (16 Field St), STH CAULFIELD 3162.

**JUST TWENTY CENTS A DAY** for life-changing nutrition. Genuine Australian company over 5 years strong. For free details please ph: 02-6926-2886, or send SAE to: 3 Silverwood Rd, WAGGA 2650.

**ACCURATE INSIGHTS AND SOLUTIONS!!!** Spiritual guidance combined with practical advice for health, business & finance. Backed by degrees in economics and wholistic medicine. Amazing results - written testimonials. Personal or phone appointments. For free info call: 07-5572-4142.

**NATURAL DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS** at discount rates. Oxichel, Emugen - Herbanol, Pharmalliance Products. Please send \$5 and SAE for sample tablet tray and brochures to: Brian O'Reilly, PO Box 1351 MURRAY BRIDGE SA 5253, or ph: 08-8531-1411.

To avoid disappointment ensure  
your ad meets our deadline

**ORGANICALLY GROWN TRADITIONAL** herbal remedies for everyday conditions, arthritis, psoriasis etc. For catalogue please send stamped addressed envelope to: Tintagel Herbs, PO Box 27, CENTRAL TILBA, NSW 2546.

## FOOD AND KITCHEN

**GRAIN GRINDER** 1/2 HP electric motor. \$250. For details ph: 03-9776-7159.

**NARA FOOD DEHYDRATORS** - 2 brand new white NARAs still in sealed boxes (ex-shop stock). \$260 + delivery. Ph: 02-9799-7814, or 0417-208-608.

**BEE POLLEN**, no additives, 450 g sample pack \$10, 1.9 kg pack \$35, 4.3 kg pack \$70, 14 kg drum \$185. Prices include p&p. JM Read, 8 River St, Murray Bridge, SA 5253.

**HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS** - mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDENONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

**WATER, PURE WATER**, 100% hydrogen & oxygen. Just as nature intended. Invest in your health with a pure water distiller. Guaranteed to consistently produce pure water, free of bacteria, viruses & all other contaminants. Your body will love you. Also a range of home flour mills. Perfect flour from coarse to pastry-fine. Lifetime warranty. More info ph: Bread 'N' Water. Freecall 1800-888-880.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**'ACRES'** magazines-papers on sustainable agriculture, 32 copies. \$45, postage incl. H Reid, PO Box 312, CLERMONT, QLD 4721.

**HELP SAVE KAKADU** from the Jabiluka uranium mine. Ring the Jabiluka Hotline now: 1300-360-565.

**AMAZING**: \$30 per month buys you a great Australian nutritional product & sets you up in a business that has the potential to earn \$1000s/month. No stock or personal selling. For free info pack contact: Bill, PO Box 249, NAMBOUR 4560.

**MARKET PLACE**, for the lifestyle farmer. Cobliss. Want to know more? SSAE, Charlie, RMB 2446 via OMEG. Ph: 03-5159-4360.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Inkjet printer cartridges are refillable! You can save up to 90% on inkjet printing costs by re-using your cartridge. Phone, fax or write for more info. Ink Again, PO Box 1851, GEE-LONG, Vic 3220. Ph/fax: 03-5224-1970, or mobile: 041-987-1414.

**RADIATION-FREE SMOKE ALARMS**, battery (\$45) or mains (\$52), photoelectric, postage \$4.50. Ph: 03-5154-0151. 3D Lights, RSD GOONGERAH 3888.

**SOLAR WATER DISTILLATOR** converts up to 3 litres per day of tapwater, borewater, seawater, any water into pristine, clinically pure, nectar of the Gods! You will be astounded and delighted! No filters, chemicals, electronics or moving parts in this fully portable high performance unit measuring only 1125 x 520 x 120 mm, weighing 10 kg. Only \$399. Money back guarantee. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**CAN YOU USE A SPANNER** and screwdriver? Three different almost unknown businesses you can run from home. No opposition. I've retired so the secrets can be yours. No canvassing or mail order. Start with \$50 capital. Details free. Send SAE to Peter Gardner, 13 Harlequin St (PO Box 571), LIGHTNING RIDGE 2834.

**TRIDENT TIPIS.** Professional workmanship, quality materials, traditional designs. For brochure, samples and prices write to: 'Earth Mother Craft', Lot 107, Cedar Creek Road, via MILLFIELD, 2325. Ph: 049-981-659.

**TIPIS,** 10'-22', from \$460. Colonial tents, tarps, awnings, annexes, canopies, tonneau covers, swag rolls. Leather, deerskin, suede clothing, any size, any design, yours or ours. Western and Indian style fringed gear a specialty. Wholesale prices. Bojo Products, BENALLA. Phone: 03-5762-2145, mobile: 015-048-196. Tipi hire avail.

**NATURAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS,** hand-made soaps & candles. Send SAE for catalogue of over 120 products. Forest Edge, 242 Albert St, MARYBOROUGH 4650.

**GREYWATER SYSTEM,** easy to construct and fully tested. Council approved (Lismore NSW). Combines a treatment unit and seepage/ evapotranspiration system. Plans and specifications available at \$50 per set from: Sustainable Greywater Systems, PO Box 176, NIMBIN 2480. Ph/fax: 066-891-703.

**COTTON ONE HUNDRED PERCENT** fitted and plain sheets, wool 100% filled pillows. Various sizes in bleached or unbleached cotton. Ph: 02-4368-2258.

## COURSES

**CORRESPONDENCE-PERMACULTURE DESIGN** Course. On completion you will have a full permaculture design & management plan for a property of your choice - to suit your needs. For more info contact: Annie Jenkins, PO Box 2404, CAIRNS, QLD 4870. Ph: 015-631-927, or E-mail: nastus@hotmail.com

**EARTH BUILDING & LIFESTYLE** - Learn about building with rammed/poured earth, rendered straw bale, mud brick, associated products & lifestyle. Attend Starting Point Seminars in Earth Building Techniques; stay at Earth House B&B, or get yourself started with Starter Pack - \$35 post incl. A guide to building your house of earth. Contact: Cherie, PO Box 222, Cockatoo 3781. Ph: 03-5968-1686.

**CORRESPONDENCE STUDIES.** Diploma and certificate programmes, professionally recognised. Learn for personal interest or business practice. Select one brochure from: Aromatherapy, Vitamin & Nutrition therapy, Traditional Folk Medicine, Animal Medicine (The 'Green' Vet), Psychic Healing, Pre-school Childcare, Safety & Security Counselling, Personal Psychic Development, Traditional Wicca. New course: 'Herbs For All Ways And Always'. Wiccan Home Studies, PO Box 138, SURRY HILLS 2010. Ph: 02-9319-6166 BH only.

# GRASSIFIEDS

DEADLINES: GR 131 - DECEMBER 20TH  
GR 132 - FEBRUARY 28TH

**HERBAL MEDICINE.** The School of Herbal Medicine, estab in Australia in 1985, offers a 1 year home study course. For details, write to PO Box 2310, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

**PERMACULTURE IN A NUTSHELL.** Introductory 1-day w/shps conducted regularly at Djanbung Gardens Permaculture Centre, 2nd & 4th Saturday of every month, incl tours of Jarlanbah Permaculture Community. Details contact: Permaculture Education, PO Box 379 NIMBIN NSW 2480. Ph: 02-6689-1755.

## LIVESTOCK

**DOG BOOKS,** All subjects from 'Paws In Print' Bookstore. Mail order catalogue avail by sending an SAE to: PO Box 3168, Wheelers Hill, 3150. Ph: 03-9795-9158.

**BOER GOATS:** Full blood stud & commercial bucks & does from \$600. Boers are docile, easy to handle & the future of the goat meat industry. Management & agistment also avail. Gumnut Stud. Ph/fax: 02-4977-2662. Lot 4, Sauls Rd, Mandalong 2264.

**MEAT RABBITS,** NZ White, Californian, British Giant. Healthy, quality breeding stock for sale. 'Why Farm Rabbits' information booklet. Ph: 02-6558-8287.

**DEXTER CATTLE,** low maintenance small acreage. Stud quality grade females. Heath Hill Stud Ph: 03-5997-8323.

**CATTLE:** The British White Cattle Society of Australia Ltd, est 1983. New members welcomed. Get in on the ground floor now. Australian and imported bloodlines available. Enquiries to: PO Box 546, CABOOLTURE, Qld 4510. Ph: 075-496-8271 or 076-958-561.

**BRADFORD HEIFERS,** bulls, hardy, easy care productive cattle, quiet, some polled, sell small lots, breeding 30 yrs. Ph: 07-4663-8120.

**MOHAIR GOATS** (Angoras) gentle, easily managed & productive. For fibre, meat, organic weed control & companionship. Stud & commercial animals avail from \$60 pair. Stokesay Angora Stud, PEARCE DALE. Ph: 03-5978-6293.

**DEXTER COWS IN CALF** or calves at foot, all grades, from \$700. ROSEWOOD. Ph: 07-5464-1684.

**DEXTER CATTLE GRADE THREE.** Joined to Elgin Park Floyd, good bloodlines, dual purpose, meat/milk. Can arrange delivery. Reg and blood typed ADA. Merriwa Stud. Ph: 03-5039-9501 AH.

## GARDEN AND ORCHARD

**WORM FACTORIES** complete with worms. Recycle your kitchen scraps or convert your pet's poo into free compost for the garden. Mailed anywhere in Australia. \$90 with worms + \$15 postage & handling. Ph: Figtree Worm Farm, 02-4226-9530.

*Please print your ad clearly  
so we can do likewise*

**'OTWAY HERBS'** nursery & country garden. Herbs, perennials, shrubs, roses, rockery, trees, many rare: Biodynamic 'A'. Open 7 days, off Great Ocean Road. Mail order 3 x 45c stamps: 155 Biddles Road, APOLLO BAY 3233.

**GINSENG** - Grow your own. Seed avail. Two varieties. Information: Ted, 'Yesspec', Box 2, OMEO 3898. Ph: 03-5159-1575 (evenings).

**BAMBOO: PLANTS - BOOKS - FLOORING,** 250 species, running or clumping, 15 titles bamboo books. Bamboo flooring boards now in stock. Send \$4.50 in stamps for catalogue. Bamboo Australia, BELLI PARK, Qld 4562.

E-Mail: bamboo@bamboo.oz.com.au.

**FREE \$4.50** packet of mixed gourd seeds when you purchase your new 52 page Gourd Growers Handbook \$18. Mixed packets, Ornamentals, Hardshells, Luffa sponge, Cannon Ball, Calabash, Bean, Bottle, Birdhouse, Goose, Maranka, Coloured Corn - \$4.50 packet. Minimum purchase \$9. Bulk pkt \$10 - 30 seeds. Giant Gourd mix - 9 seeds \$10 packet. All prices include p&p. Money back guarantee. Send your order to: The Gourdfather, PO Box 298GR, East Maitland 2323. Ph: 02-4933-6624. PS: Craft books also available.

**COMPANION PLANTING CHART.** Over 90 vegetables, herbs and fruits, including plants as insect repellants. Sow When Chart. Suggested sowing times for 100 vegetables, herbs and flowers. Mail order \$7 each + \$3 p&p. Plum Products (G), PO Box 120, Wards Rd, TAMBO UPPER, 3885.

**BAMBOO PLANTS,** lge range, best prices. Ph: 07-4129-4470, fax: 07-4129-0130.

**TREE GUARDS** all shapes/sizes from under 10 cents each. Bamboo stakes and weedmats. International Reforestation Supplies, 510 Bellbird Rd. BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph/fax: 051-579-404.

**TOBACCO SEEDS** selected from quality, best flavoured plants. Organically grown. Seeds and instructions \$5. E Madge, PO Box 114, POMONA, Qld 4568. (MS 626).

**EARTHWORMS. FREE,** the most comprehensive catalogue of books on this subject. Send a business size SAE to: Worm World, PO Box 204GR, ROLLINGSTONE, Qld 4816. Ph/fax: 07-4770-7001.

**TOBACCO SEED.** Organically grown (Virginian), cultivation and curing notes included. Send \$5 to Lyn O'Brien, C/- PO, BARMAN 3639.

**RAINFOREST SEED COLLECTORS** national link-up. Buy and sell local seed. Our newsletter has lots to offer. Local seed grows better and doesn't pollute your gene pool. Quarterly newsletter subs \$20, concession \$10. Offer local seed - free subs. RSC, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454. Ph: 02-6655-2233.

**LOOKING FOR HERITAGE** or traditional fruits & vegetables? Join the Heritage Seed Curators Association. Our regular 'Seed Listing' winter issue of The Curator lists the sources for thousands of vegie, herb & fruit varieties. Our summer issue has major articles, tips and notes about saving heirloom varieties. Membership costs \$25 PA or \$18 for low income earners. Contact HSCA, PO Box 1450, BAIRNSDALE, Vic 3875.

**UNUSUAL VEGETABLE SEEDS.** For catalogue send 5x45c stamps to: GGO, PO Box 908, Gympie 4570.



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## HOLIDAYS

**FARM COTTAGE**, Neerim North-Noojee, Victoria, near Mt Baw Baw. Fantastic views, 3 b/bs, \$70 per night. Ph/fax: 03-9521-0052.

**WRITER'S RETREAT**, 1/2 hr from Warwick in mtn valley. Tranquillity, natural wildlife, suit single or couple. \$125 pw, incl linen, gas, electricity. No pets. Ph: 07-4666-1102.

**MORUYA - FAR SOUTH COAST NSW**, romantic 1b/r and family 2 b/r bush cabins. Big open fires. \$250 per week. \$100 per weekend. Ph: 02-4474-2542, pm.

**FOOTHILLS BARRINGTON TOPS**, 2 small rock-walled cottages, solar & gas. Secluded wildlife refuge, r/forest gullies, bushwalking, bird watching retreat. Ph/fax: 'Yeranda Cottages', 02-4992-1208. home page: <http://www.oze-mail.com.au/~yeranda>

**LAMINGTON GLEN** - rainforest retreat, secluded cabin. Everything supplied except food. Ph: 075-544-8166.

**MODERN ELEVEN METRE**, yacht WWOOF/ACE host, maintenance or donation, Gold Coast islands, Jan-March '99. Travel north April-May, Whitsundays June-Nov. Ph: 018-720-156 AH.

**ORGANIC HOLIDAY FARM**, 'Heron on Earth' is central to north Tasmania's wild places. Fully equipped modern solar house, close to beaches. Rates include bedding towels & organic produce in season (asparagus, raspberries, milk, eggs). Canoes & bikes avail. Information/bookings. Ph: 03-6428-6144. Email: [heron@southcom.com.au](mailto:heron@southcom.com.au)

## FOR SALE

**CANON SOLAR PANELS**. Latest technology at electrifying prices! Genuine five amps output. Equivalent to 80 watt Solarex, Siemens, BP etc. Introductory offer only \$499, cheap freight. Many other solar specials. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607.

**SOLAR WATER DISTILLATOR** converts up to 3 litres per day of tapwater, borewater, seawater, any water into pristine, clinically pure, *nectar of the Gods!* You will be astounded and delighted! No filters, chemicals, electronics or moving parts in this fully portable high performance unit measuring only 1125 x 520 x 120 mm, weighing 10 kg. Only \$399. Money back guarantee. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607.

**SELETRONIC INVERTER**. Model SE-12/24, maximum output 2000 watts, true sinewave. Introductory offer only \$999. Cheap freight. Many other inverter specials. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607.

**UNI-SUN DEEP CYCLE BATTERY**. 6000 watt-hour capacity, 12 or 24 volts. Up to 5 year cycle life. Suitable for small to medium size domestic solar power systems using gas refrigeration. Introductory offer only \$899. Cheap freight. Many other battery specials. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607.

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able of them all. Introductory offer only \$1300. Cheap freight. Many other wind generator specials. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607. **'SOLAR TECHNOLOGY DESIGNERS CATALOGUE 1999'**. Almost 10 years on and still shining! Australia's leading renewable energy manual and source book. If you want more great bargains as listed above, plus a treasure trove of solar knowledge, here's the Grass Rooters Bible! This book will save you thousands of dollars on mistakes you won't make, and exorbitant prices you won't pay! See our display advert for further details. Universality Of The Sun. Ph: 04-1893-4607.

## SERVICES OFFERED

**HOME PLANS**. 'The Earth Builders Plan Catalogue' (180 pages): 92 plans for handcrafted buildings (83 homes and 9 workshops, cabins, and carports) of mud brick, rammed earth, stone, pole-frame, timber, poured earth, strawbale, construction details; usable sample working of a home (12 x A3 sheets). Mail \$62 (p&p incl) to: John Barton - Building Design, 31 Sharp St, NEWTOWN, Vic 3220. Phone and enquiries to: 03-5222-5774 for fixed quote to draw and document your home plan. Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard, cheques accepted.

**MUDBRICK (EARTHWALL) TESTING** - certificate for council. Effluent Disposal design (AS1547) for domestic premises. Soil testing. Hackett Laboratory Services, 4/8 Bellbowrie St, PORT MACQUARIE 2444. Ph: 065-832-635. Fax: 065-837-453.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**EARN EXTRA MONEY AT HOME!** New Australian Company. Joining is free. No selling needed. Just purchase quality nutrition & aloe vera products for your own use & earn a growing income as well. For more info send business size SAE to: Leda Innovations, PO Box 539, NAMBUCCA HEADS, NSW 2448.

**FREE ENTRY** for your Alternative Product/Service in new Australian directory. Send details: J Midgley, Box 148, MEDOWIE 2318.

**FREE ACCOMMODATION** on country property in SE QLD in return for 9 hrs/week help in gardening etc. Share property with vegetarian couple. Prefer single woman or mother and child. Wayne & Milu, PO Box 235, GIN GIN 4671. Ph: 07-4157-2736.

If you're sending in an ad, please, please, please put your phone number in the correct format. ie: 00-0000-0000. We need to know where your area code ends and your ph number begins!

## CALENDAR EVENTS

**FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS** on coloured sheep & their products Deakin University, Geelong, 6th - 12th July 1999. Featuring woolcraft & sheep related workshops, papers, displays, demonstrations, day tours. Fleece & woolcraft competitions. Residential registrations close 20th December, nonresidential 31st March 1999. For info ph/fax: 03-5983-1307. Or write to: PO Box 158, HASTINGS, Vic 3915.

**FESTIVAL OF FOLK, RHYTHM AND LIFE**, December 4-6 1998. 'Bilyana' Woolshed Valley, El Dorado. Features include market, healing village, indigenous and local bands, comfy camping, huge range of food, art installations, workshops, environmental info, over 40 acts on 3 stages. Guinness on tap. No-glass-styrene-or-litter policy. For info call 03-9886-0582.

**CRYSTAL WATERS PERMACULTURE** Village, 'the motivating edge' conducts 1/2 day permaculture and community tours on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month. Contact James on: 07-5494-4721 for info, or write to: The motivating edge, Crystal Waters, MS 16, MALENY 4552. Booking is essential.

## CLUBS

**NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION** of Australia (NAAA). Information, counselling, newsletter. For information and membership write to: PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK 2150.

**AFFILIATED DONKEY SOCIETIES** of Australia. For info on membership, magazines and help avail, write to: Mr Ralph Grinly, 18 Inverness Rd, SOUTH PENRITH, NSW 2750, and you will be contacted by the representative in your state.

## PUBLICATIONS

**STEINER HOME SCHOOLING?** A creative-teaching manual. History, structure, bureaucracy, resources & facilities, training & teachers, curriculum content, creativity, discipline, extra-curricular, problem solving, high school, student qualifications, the future, children's drawings, childhood illnesses. Send \$12 to: Golden Beetle Books, Box 33 BRUNSWICK HEADS 2483, or write/fax for titles list to: 02-6680-4314, Ph: 02-6680-3889.

**DIY MANUALS ON MANY SUBJECTS** pertaining to self-sustainability. Send stamped self-addressed envelope for detailed listing to: DMD Recycling Systems, ONGERUP 6336, WA.

**'GRANNY'S RECIPES, REMEDIES AND FORMULAS'**. Granny's saving ways with food. \$10 per book. H Pitt, PO Box 207, MUDGE 2850.

**'GRASS ROOTS' NUMBERS** 45-52 & 65-100. I would like to sell them to someone who would appreciate them as I have. \$30. Ph: 03-9870-7517.

**SUPPRESSED & UNUSUAL TECHNOLOGIES CATALOGUE**. Free energy devices, antigravity, hydrogen fuel, magnetic motors, alternative fuels & engines, high mileage, 200+ topics. Send 5 x Aust 45c stamps to: Lostech Archive, PO Box 456-R, TOLGA, QLD 4882, Australia.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PUBLICATIONS

**FREE SUSTAINABLE LIVING NEWSLETTER**, for Eco Real Estate Australia. Great houses, properties, products for sale. Ph/fax: 02-9528-8614. PO Box 33, OYSTER BAY, NSW 2225. email [pk@eco.com.au](mailto:pk@eco.com.au). [www.eco.com.au](http://www.eco.com.au)

**BOOKLETS: DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS** for *Making Your Own Quality Sausages* - \$10. *Meat Preservation* (without refrigeration) - \$5. *Home Brewing* the old way - numerous recipes from the past - \$10. *Wine Making of Olden Times* - old & well tried recipes from farmhouses & cottages - \$10. *Lithuanian Recipes* - unusual, economical & tasty - \$5. PO Box 390, MORPHETT VALE 5162.

**STEINER EDUCATION BOOKS**. For school of homeschooled. Write for titles list: Box 33, BRUNSWICK HEADS 2483, or fax: 066-804-314. **THE COMPLETE SELF-SUFFICIENCY/SURVIVAL JOURNAL**: Supplies, alternative power, tips, disaster preparedness, reviews, more. Call for free issue: 07-4787-1732.

**'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES'** for profit or pleasure - how to get started. Pollination/honey potential in Queensland. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

**'IRMINISUL'** is a 54 page quarterly journal dealing with Odinic tradition, Runes, earth healing, history & nith tribal lifestyle. Contact: PO Box 42, COOLAMON 2701.

**'CHOOKWISE: A Self Sufficiency Guide to the Management of the Domestic Hen'**, by Linda Marold. A simple straightforward guide to chook care for beginners. Covers feeding, housing, problems and breeding. Written for Australian conditions. \$12 post paid anywhere in Australia. L Marold, PO Box 54, CASTLEMAINE 3450.

**'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE'**, is a co-operatively run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin and other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 editions for \$18, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480.

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**VIRGO WOMAN**, 40s, intelligent, bisexual, naturist, disillusioned with life's grief & losses, seeks couple or community willing to teach alternative lifestyle - meditation, organic gardening, vegetarian cooking, stress management, yoga. Prefer Whitsunday, FNQ, NE NSW. I am gentle and caring with love to give. Thank you for writing to: Lauren (GR130), C/- Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

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## CONTACTS

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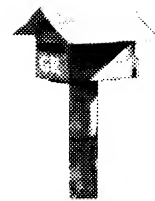
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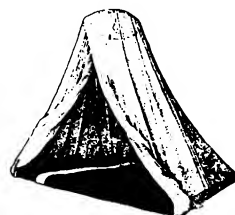
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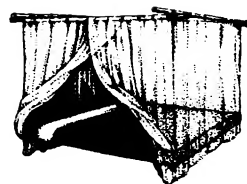
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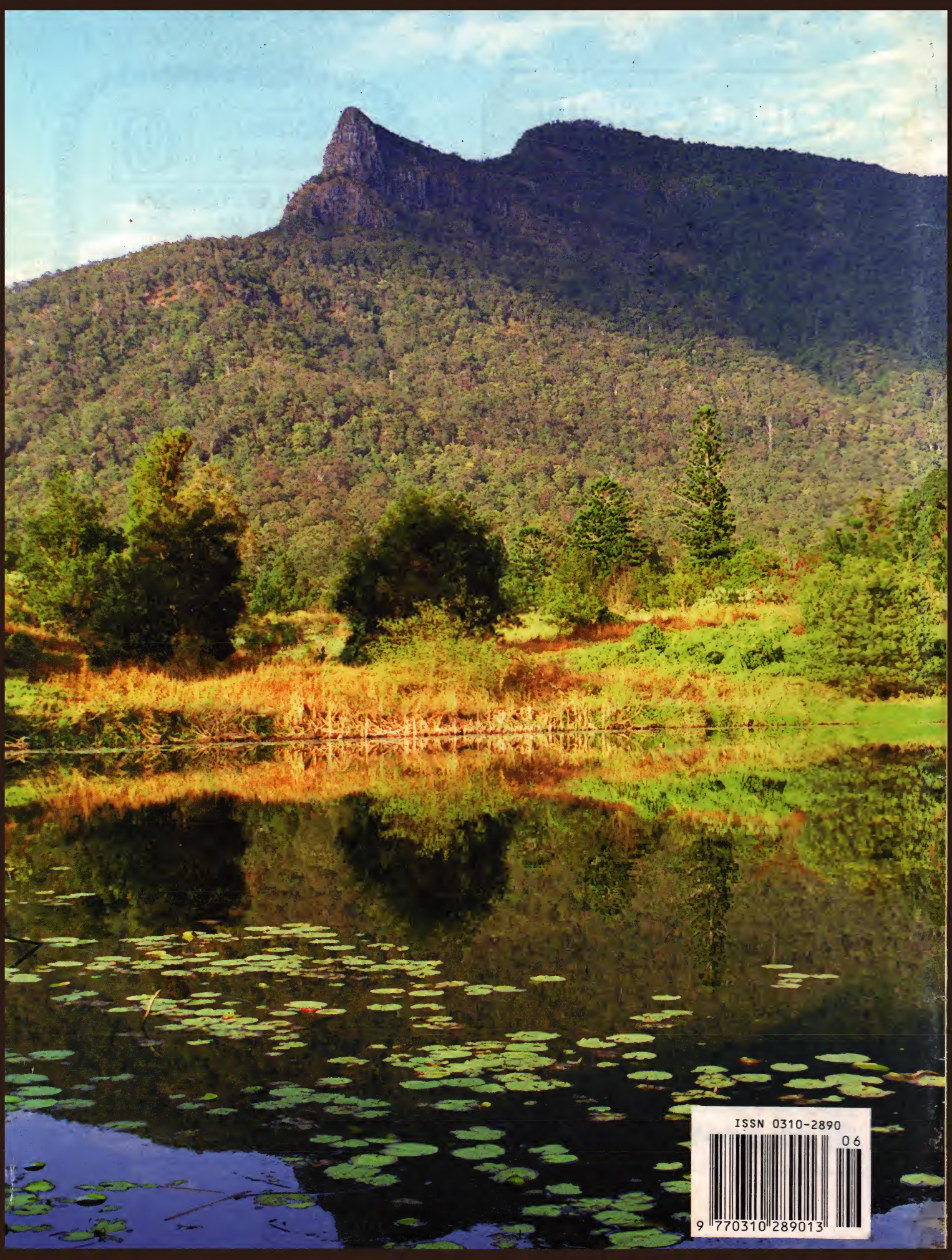
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